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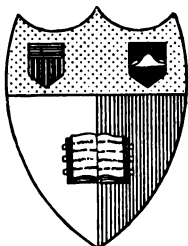
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THE TRAGEDY OF  
SAINT ELIZABETH  
OF HUNGARY BY  
ARTHUR DILLON

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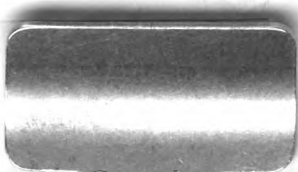
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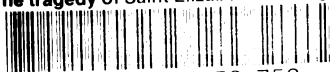
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The tragedy of Saint Elizabeth of Hungar



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THE TRAGEDY OF  
SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

*By the same Author*

RIVER SONGS

THE GREEK KALENDS

KING WILLIAM I, THE CONQUEROR

THE MAID OF ARTEMIS

KING ARTHUR PENDRAGON

ORPHEUS

THE HEIR'S COMEDY

# THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

BY  
ARTHUR DILLON

LONDON  
ELKIN MATHEWS, VIGO STREET  
1908

HA



AS 27737

NOTE

The Play is founded on "The Saint's Tragedy" of Charles Kingsley. This is to make full acknowledgment of debt—structural and verbal.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

LUDWIG, Landgrave of Thuringen.

HEINRICH RASPO, his Brother.

BISHOP OF BAMBERG, Uncle to Elizabeth.

RUDOLPH VON VARILA, the Cup-bearer,

WALTER VON VARILA, his Kinsman,

LEUTOLF VON ERLSTETTEN,

HARTWIG VON ERBA,

WOLFRAM VON SAYM,

} Vassals  
to  
Ludwig.

PRINCE BANFI, sent by the King of Hungary.

A KNIGHT, in the service of Kaiser Friedrich.

CONRAD OF MARPURG,

A FRIAR,

} Dominicans.

GERARD, the Provincial,

SUPERIOR, at Eisenach,

} Franciscans.

A PARISH PRIEST.

A FOOL.

ARMOURER, to the Bishop of Bamberg.

A DWARF, and other CLOWNS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ELIZABETH, Daughter to the King of Hungary, betrothed  
to Ludwig.

SOPHIA, Mother to Ludwig.

COUNTESS VON VARILA, Wife to the Cup-bearer.

COUNTESS VON SAYM, Wife to Wolfram.

ISENTRUDE, Nurse to Elizabeth.

GUTA, her Maiden.

THEKLA, Sister to the Fool.

GRETHEL, living near by Eisenach.

TWO WOMEN, of the Third Order of S. Francis, attending  
Elizabeth.

AN ITALIAN WOMAN.

NOBLES, RELIGIOUS and ATTENDANTS.

*Scene*: Once at Cremona ; otherwise, in Thuringen,  
in the Wartburg at Eisenach, Bamberg and,  
last, at Marpurg.

*Time*: Thirteenth century.

# THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

## ACT I

SCENE I.—FIELDS OUTSIDE OF EISENACH.

(*Enter* HEINRICH, RUDOLPH, WOLFRAM *and*  
ATTENDANTS.)

WOLFRAM. In the might of Love's Martyrdoms, I tell thee, Duke Heinrich, the Landgrave, thy brother, hath a keener bird than any of thine.

HEINRICH. Let him give it a gift to his Lady-love.

WOLFRAM. That he forgets to do; from sport royal with the Princes his neighbours, Ludwig cometh home trophied from the chase, but—as is marked—most empty of gifts, who failed never so much before. What sayeth the Count von Varila?

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

RUDOLPH. Noble Wolfram von Saym, I said nought.

WOLFRAM. Nought is but naughtiness; thus hath Ludwig but a naughty gift for the good Elizabeth; for he giveth her nought. But all this while, lo, she is at our elbow, three-bags-full of flowers for divers holy shrines o' the countryside!

*(Enter ELIZABETH, with roses.)*

HEINRICH. Pluck her by the sleeve if thou wilt.

WOLFRAM *(To SERVANT)*. Fellow, pull her by the sleeve, daintily.

ELIZABETH. Your wills, my lords?

WOLFRAM. Whither, Elizabeth of Hungary, whither, whither?

HEINRICH. Whither wilt?

ELIZABETH. Why stand our chapels closed, as if by an interdict?

WOLFRAM. Good sooth, for that they are not ope! But, by command, the doors are oft made fast, to mock thee, to flout our little Mistress Beguine. Yet, lady, be of the Poor Clares, and, for thy Preceptor, by Bel and the Dragon! seek thee out that gentle Shaveling of Marpurg, him who swears there be Stadings in the land—or howsoever are named this heretical baggage—worshippers of a black cat, and baby-eaters.

HEINRICH. We are much displeased. The wherefore

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

is known. Thou flungest off thy coronal at the Feast of the Assumption, in Saint Katharine's Church. The plaited thorns, forsooth, reproached thee, till goldsmith's gauds shamed thee to put them off.

WOLFRAM. Whereat gentle and simple gaping wide, there is no help, but the noble Landgravine and her Peeresses copy the action, though it mislike them hideously.

HEINRICH. Let her run her own course. Must all discrown,  
To tickle churls with acts of piety  
Fit for a Christmas mumming at their prayers,  
Or 'tis not worship? The Lord Bishop of Bamberg,  
Thine uncle, should instruct thee worldly  
Even in religion, that mighty man of valour;  
But thou art orgulous to teach the saints  
The *paternoster*. In thy games of play—  
I have it on the authority of thy nurse  
Who most maligneth when she thinks to praise—  
Even from thy cradle, thou threwest thy playmates down,  
To ask their pardon. I do spurn these spurns  
At dignity. Save Ludwig marry her  
Within the twelvemonth, meet in council, counts,  
And cut her adrift.

ELIZABETH.

Cut a-drift?



THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

RUDOLPH. My little lady ?

(*Exeunt* HEINRICH, WOLFRAM, WALTER *and*  
ATTENDANTS.)

ELIZABETH. Good Count Rudolph,  
Where shall I hide my head ?

RUDOLPH. The Margrave Raspon,  
If there be need, shall feel the weight of my hand.

ELIZABETH. Blows come of a blow. The cloister  
were  
A paradise of peace, but that it parts  
Brother and sister.

RUDOLPH. Ludwig thou callest brother ;  
It is a pretty use.

ELIZABETH. And shall be used.  
Ludwig calleth me sister. But by this time  
The Landgravine begrudgeth what I eat,  
Even to mouthfuls ; every stitch I wear ;  
So much as house-room to me, less or more,  
Unless in Hungary. It is past patience ;  
While to lose patience is to lose the merit  
Of suffering. Take me to Hungary.  
Have I done what I ought not, or left undone  
That which I ought to have done ? Take me to  
Hungary.

RUDOLPH. Thou shalt not back to Hungary.





## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

HARTWIG. After, to close a good day's sport, bless the mark, home to vespers !

WOLFRAM. Body o' me, Count Hartwig, home in a canter to spice-loaf and mulled red wine ! By all bees and bee's-wax, shall we forswear honey ? No, by Saint Jucundus of York in England.

LUDWIG. Wherefore by Jucundus ?

WOLFRAM. My only patron in the calendar ; a Carthusian, all shaven. Hath our princess taught thee no tale of his life ? Verily, he robbed the poor-box, was at York fair, and thence wheeled home drunk in a barrow.

HARTWIG. To snore till morning.

WOLFRAM. They bare him to the cellars, knocked away brickwork, thrust him through, and built up. Yet had they but thrust him into their neighbours' cellar, neighbours of their own order. A year he dwelt in Carthusian silence, nothing asked nor answered.

LEUTOLF. A round year's penance !

WOLFRAM. Then he robbed the poor-box, and from York fair was wheeled home drunk, borne to the cellar, and there bricked up alive. Now was he but back among his old brethren, a saint apparent by his miraculous rising after a year's entombment ; and to earn the like sanctity was there much wine spilt down

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

pious throats. But I will only taste to the turning of a roundel ; I will tipple, not exceed. I had rather worship my lady's bosom fasting, than drink out a pipe of Rhenish in a hermitage.

RUDOLPH. Ye who swear so strangely, there be hands at hand can make you skip under the self-same flail the Troubadours feel to their sorrow in Provence.

LEUTOLF. A mighty preacher, I heard him lately, and hated him ; he held a whole market-place mute, but rather by terror than comfort.

HARTWIG. Hand and glove with the Spaniard Dominic. I hear of him, Lord Leutolf, one Master Conrad, a man of good lineage to boot, and now of a Mendicant Order.

LUDWIG. A holy man, so let this end it. Lord Rudolph, thou who shalt ride companionably by me all day, walk with me now.

WOLFRAM. The Cup-bearer has a word for Ludwig's ear, as I think, my Lord Margrave.

HEINRICH. No !

WOLFRAM. I' faith !

LUDWIG. Fair friends, my nobles, try down the water-meadows. Go, falconers.

(*Exit* HEINRICH, LEUTOLF, HARTWIG, WOLFRAM *and* WALTER, *with* FALCONERS *and* ATTENDANTS.)

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

LUDWIG. Sir Count, in sincerity, is not my peregrine the better bird ?

RUDOLPH. Thy brother in everything is envious.

LUDWIG. There is more in thy mind than falconry ; my brother is envious ? Ambition aims at Palestine ; will he supplant me in my birthright, and outstrip me there ?

RUDOLPH. Envy is, to speak it amply, noble ambition's black shadow, and to speak gravely—I am lief of these words with thee—thou standing much in the state, and he halting one goodly step short of Landgrave, he would see thee monk—a good profession though not mine—and to speak amply and gravely, it is thought by many, your affections are of his mood.

LUDWIG. "*They say ; what say they ? Let them say.*"

RUDOLPH. Indeed they say, if you let them say, the road that brought King Andreas' daughter hither, may, in no long time, see her, a virgin saint, returning.

LUDWIG. Oh, listen ! Were yonder mountain of Inselberg, from base to peak, gold of Parvaim, to outvie the Niebelungen hoard, I would forgo the proffer of it ; but never the worship and hope of mine Elspeth. Her dusk hair and her midnight eyes contest it together, and come off both conquerors ; yet, superlative to me, they

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

are forgotten when she speaks, for the beauty of her discourse ; and yet her grave silence is better, though her gaiety is the very triumph and car of youth. Yet all the while, go to ; fasts are her feasts ; her element is to adore immaculate things, not flesh and blood.

RUDOLPH. Meanwhile, is she mouthed at with shooting out of lips ; she rules not with princes, but serves with scullions ; besides all manner of daily scorns.

LUDWIG. Ha !

RUDOLPH. Equally for her own piety and her mother's iniquity.

LUDWIG. That is ill to bear. Her mother—I know so much that the whole were no blacker—was pander to a brother's lewdness. The sins of fathers should make us infinitely pitiful of children.

RUDOLPH. Roundly then, when Pope Honorius made preach a new Crusade, King Andreas took the cross, leaving his government to the noble Bancbanus whose rule was just. Soon, on the King's departure, this Regent's wife, one of exceeding beauty, was forced by Queen Gertrude's brother, the Queen being accessory. Bancbanus, when he understood his dishonour, stabbed the queen dead, published his wrongs and his revenge, shewing his bloody sword in the street, and that he declined not trial. Hastening to King Andreas, then at

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Micklegarth, he was there acquitted, and the Queen condemned dead ; though the deed ruined the avenger's house through resentment of the king's sons.

LUDWIG. 'Tis blacker than 'tis painted. Who throws this in her teeth? As I dare swear, my mother! I know my mother, in gusts of good or ill, variable. There is else none dare wag tongue on her.

RUDOLPH. Your knights to a man.

LUDWIG. I will make a birch-rod of my lance, but I will correct them. Chivalry, thou art but a painted courtesan. I play the braggart. Sir Count, tell her—I will send a token by your hands to speak for me—a mirror I have of argent plate—tell her, if I am silent, she must think it the silence of devotion, never of sleep. Words give the breast too rough draught of air; the heart mislikes it; manhood feels more than man to man says with modesty.

RUDOLPH. Shall they tear up the betrothal, where the dowry but half paid, and sundry reasons, as they aver, urge it?

LUDWIG. The vows made for us in childhood, let me fulfil them, and—profanely nothing—let me take her to wife. The day, let it be Agnes my sister's wedding day, that comes so fast. For the answer I misdoubt it.

RUDOLPH. In the Princess there is saint and woman

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

at an auction, each bids above the other ; but with fair dealing I will be thy broker. Keep the field to-day with thy Counts ; be of good cheer.

LUDWIG. To the meadows ; the day is ripe ! When we are wed, for her sake will I have fetched that good father, Master Conrad, whom Rome chooses for cure of souls ; he shall rule my life.

*(Excunt.)*

SCENE II.—IN THE WARTBURG. *Dishes and Wine  
brought in.*

*(Enter FOOL and THEKLA with flowers.)*

FOOL. Now, ye minstrels, if ye have kits, rasp them across the gut till their bellies groan again ; if ye have bagpipes, let them cry with the wind like very human babes. Look to it, Thekla, if thou must needs hither to see our little Princess of Hungary wed, keep thy hands from picking and stealing, and thy tongue from evil speaking, lying and slandering ; for all do so in the Courts of Princes. Likewise, keep thee from all sedition, heresy and schism, not to covet nor desire, and from the seven deadly sins. This is her beldame nurse cumbered with much serving.

*(Enter ISENTRUDE with GUTA and MAIDENS  
carrying flowers.)*

ISENTRUDE. Maids ! Maids ! Your flower baskets !  
See, at the door,



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Both bridal parties come ; both brides, both brides !  
This hour in holy matrimony joins  
Ludwig and Elizabeth, Agnes and her princely groom.  
Strew, Thekla ; rose-leaves and roses.

THEKLA. 'Tis merry time of day !

ISENTRUDE. Merry for fools, and happy for the  
wise.

FOOL. And we are fools, being brother and sister  
born so.

ISENTRUDE. Strew, Guta, thou dearest of her hand-  
maids, strew !

When once the Landgrave spoke, all mouths were stopt,  
And none by word or deed opposed more.

*(Enter LUDWIG with ELIZABETH, and AGNES with her  
LORD, as BRIDES and BRIDEGROOMS, HEINRICH,  
SOPHIA, RUDOLPH and the COUNTESS VON VARILA,  
WALTER, LEUTOLF, HARTWIG, WOLFRAM and the  
COUNTESS VON SAYM, attended ; stuffs and Silversmith's  
work carried in.)*

ELIZABETH. A world of bliss, therefore, a world of  
praise !

Guta, oh, Isentrude, my love to you,  
Elizabeth's best riches, *love* !

FOOL. Saint Dorothy, what roses are here ?

ELIZABETH. Would thy bells were church bells.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

FOOL. Yet stand I in less peril than my neighbours ;  
for my neighbour calling me fool is in danger of hell-fire.

ELIZABETH. *When the devil was sick.* It will be thus  
with thee.

FOOL. Have thy knees shod with iron ; paving stones  
may be re-laid, but there runs but one pair of knees to a  
life-time.

ELIZABETH. Thou rogue ! This is a game of last  
touch.

LUDWIG. He is of the fashion of young blood. We  
would Conrad of Marpurg had tied the knot of to-day's  
solemnity. That could not be, for the call of his many  
cares ; yet we expect him. Take thou our state.

ELIZABETH. Then be this Calvary, to make me meek !  
Dread Lady Mother, what is thy benison,  
Upon us four that are thy children ?  
Oh, when Count Rudolph gave the silver glass  
Crossed with the crucifix that Ludwig sent,  
I laughed, and kissed the Rood, and clapped my hands !  
What benison ?

SOPHIA. Health my two daughters, and my two dear  
sons,  
Sophia wills you. Ye custodians,  
Shew forth the dowry that great Hungary  
Matched with his child. He greeted Thuringen.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

And, for the portion of Elizabeth,  
Her father, bettering our gifts with better,  
Until our richest shewed not rich at all  
In value, gave this cradle and this bath, both  
Of solid silver, with tissue of 'figurie,  
Out of his treasury ; where by so much  
He overtopped our knowledge of Earth's wealth,  
As Almain never saw ; our nuptial embassage,  
For poor two baggage waggons that set out,  
Homed with thirteen.

THEKLA. Aha, aha ! Whoever saw the like ?

FOOL. 'Tis my sister, but a feckless maid.

ELIZABETH. A hearing ! Gag her not !

THEKLA. I am not simple, but the best favoured lass  
in the parish.

FOOL. Go, tickle trout !

HEINRICH. Get thee gone ! A goodly minx !

THEKLA. I lick my chops like Grimalkin, and eye the  
larder shelf.

FOOL. Bear with her ! Every woman is possessed  
with seven devils.

LUDWIG. How so ?

FOOL. Out of Mary Magdalene were cast seven, but  
out of what other woman ?

LUDWIG. None, surely.

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FOOL. Then hath every other woman seven devils still.

ELIZABETH. With all the world to swim in,  
Why paddle in blasphemy? I had rather cry my eyes  
out

Than make game of Holy Writ. Bring her to me ;  
I almost love affliction for itself.  
Who never, even in childhood, sobbed and smarted,  
Having a bruised shin, or some such matter,  
He is a tyrant and insensible  
Of what he never felt. When I left home,  
I have been told my mother wept. Quit pomp ;  
Ye tell me too much of a store that weighs  
Upon our hands ; the queen my mother wept ;  
Tell me of her.

SOPHIA. An if I told, couldst mend ?

ELIZABETH. Is she in heaven or hell ?  
God knows, thou sayest ; there are masses for her soul  
In every Magyar minster daily sung.  
Our holiest need it, but the lost are lost.  
She is not lost ? But God in heaven, He knows.  
Oh, to live holy, die a saint, build chantries,  
And save her soul alive ! Out, wilful will,  
My wilful will a sterner will must knap,  
Stamp out and overwhelm. Hath not the Church,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Among her noble army of preachers, one  
Of nether millstone grit ; one, if no more ?  
I am untutored ; to put out mine eyes  
And follow blind is the fore-hammer best  
To break my pride in pieces. Blind me !

(*Enter* CONRAD.)

Oh, who art thou ?

What is thy name ?

CONRAD.

Conrad !

ELIZABETH.

Of Marpurg ?

CONRAD.

Woman, thou hast said.

ELIZABETH. Thou comest to daunt us, like the  
skulls,

Through either eye-socket a thigh-bone thrust,  
On our last resting-places carved to pave  
Our lofty minsters with the thought of death ;  
But I'll not fear thee.

HEINRICH (*Aside*). I fear him ; yet I fear to thwart  
him more.

SOPHIA. He is unseasonable.

THEKLA.

Oh, the magpie black and white !

FOOL. Swaddle thee in a woollen shroud !

(*Carries* THEKLA *out*.)

CONRAD.

How long shall I refrain

Even from good words ?

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

ELIZABETH. What wouldst?

CONRAD. Denounce wrath!

LUDWIG. Wherefore? Upon whom?

HARTWIG. Og, Gog and Magog! an a man spat his throat dry, he might die of the sweating sickness. Dominicans! Domini Canes! Very dogs!

LUDWIG. Fair speech!

WOLFRAM. Ye know the story of Friar Onion, who would shew a feather of Saint Gabriel's wing?

LUDWIG. A truce! A truce!

RUDOLF. We must needs hear von Saym.

WOLFRAM. Two wags changed the paraquito's plume he had for sea-coal. But our friar when he opened his poke, nothing abashed, cried, "*I would have shewn you, dear brethren, a feather moulted from the Archangel; but I will more, I will abound; here be the very coals that roasted Saint Lawrence!*"

HARTWIG (*To WOLFRAM*). This shall prefer thee to the like deaconate.

ELIZABETH. Vanity of vanities!

WOLFRAM (*Singing*). *Tarala! Tarala!* I will deny and defy with a light heart and a fillip of the fingers. If I burn, I will burn rarely, like wood of aloes on a brazier. Friar me but Friar Tuck; I will bait the Papal Bull with talbots!

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

CONRAD. Eat, drink and be merry, ye lords of the  
Philistines !

Sons of Belial, whose belly is your god ;  
To-morrow be cast into the oven ! How shall ye escape  
The greater damnation ? Repent ! Oh, why  
Drop helpless into patient hell  
That gapes and waits for more ? Oh, shall not this  
Change your carnation to the hue of milk ?  
Ye'll howl like wolves and grin like death's-heads,  
To rush through vaulted hells of ice and fire,  
By all uncared for, and by God disowned.

ELIZABETH. Oh, to repent !  
Grant me thy peace, father ; or bring'st thou not  
Peace but a sword ? Teach me ; or claim I knowledge,  
Choosing my teacher ? Yet I would know more.  
I would be holy ; I would rule myself ;  
I would obey, which fits men to command,—  
Sometimes, not always ; but, unquestionably,  
'Tis safer to take counsel than give counsel.  
I yield thee up the hard part ; whether I dread  
My burden, or more dread to burden thee,  
I hesitate. Crush me, I would be crushed ;  
But vouchsafe counsel. Artless as I am,  
Shall I to the schools ? As well, with cap in hand,  
Chase butterflies, rainbows, and will-o'-the-wisp in the fens.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Doctors dispute ! A dunce's cogitations  
Are his admired wisdom, like the heed  
Of a fond mother for her idiot,  
The more deformed the lovelier ; I will distrust  
Learning and disputation. Sit, eat ;  
And bless our breakfast with thy reverence.

CONRAD. Not so. Death is in the pot ! Look to  
yourselves !

Eternal Death, shaped as accustomed wrong !  
Extortionate excise doth load your board,  
Until repletion gender sloth, with forced  
And savory viands whose abundant waste  
Giveth the bread of thousands to a few.  
O Gluttony, Lazarus lieth sick  
At Dives' door.

ELIZABETH. Did not I note him, Ludwig ;  
A man all rags and leanness propt upon  
A skill-less crutch, his need made more to him  
Than a king's sceptre ?

LUDWIG. You marked him as we passed.

ELIZABETH. He dragged his limbs along, begging our alms,  
Whose every step was labour. Our sweetmeats and  
Our cordial liquors be his sustenance !  
Bring me a cup and dish, pray ; serve me here  
Where need doth ache. Good boys ! I thank you, boy.  
Carry them, gentlest Guta.



THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

CONRAD. Both hands full !  
Prodigal gifts, and prodigal attire !  
Art humble ? Thou art haughty, and arrayest  
Thy guilty flesh in soft and pampering silk,  
Tinselled without, most like an easy sin.

ELIZABETH. Pride under every show,  
Hath lived to green old age ; goodness in silk  
Is pure as in thy weeds. Chide not my gown.  
Fold this around yon child of misery,  
Isentrude.

LUDWIG. Dismantled ?

ELIZABETH. It is wanton guise ;  
And shames this day ! My miniver shall warm  
Lazarus on our doorstep.

LUDWIG. Unrobed, thou art robed royally !

ELIZABETH (*To ISENTRUDE and GUTA*). Give them  
away ! Tell me how the poor creature smiles.

(ISENTRUDE and GUTA *beckon CLOWN into the entry of  
the door, whom they feed and clothe.*)

I would lose my life to find it !

CONRAD. For that cause, hug suffering  
That flesh does most abhor, despise and shun.  
Abase thyself in earnest, and eschew  
Public almsgiving ; put it clean away ;  
A fool's paradise that shall avail thee nought ;  
No more than gift of unknown tongues. The heathen

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Burns, unto void and wooden gods, his wealth,  
Making a wasteful smoke. The Hebrew vows  
His acts under the law. The Christian  
Whose blood-money is the blood of God the Christ  
Oweth a subtler offering  
Which I will teach you, though my rigour split  
Your very heart.

ELIZABETH.                      Thou makest me tremble !

CONRAD.                      It is well thou tremblest.

RUDOLPH. *How well thou tremblest ?* Art the northern  
gale,

To rock us thoroughly ?

CONRAD.                      Flinch ye to be rocked ?

A needle point is foothold and to spare  
For armies of angels, hosted battails of them,  
With all their pennons up ; thy little breast,  
Thy breast is large enough to undergo  
Such tribulations as make peoples groan,  
To bleach thee whiter than the glistered salt,  
Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH.                      High priest,

Thou art appalling ; but throw doubt to the wind ;  
Our drunken porters woo a fight, to gauge  
The pleasure by their bruises ; shall the daughters  
Of the kingdom give over for a pang ?

RUDOLPH.                      I do beseech you, pause.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

This man is terrible as death and hell,  
Who, taken home, will prove a frost-bound adder,  
And bite his cherishers dead.

CONRAD.                      Fear me as if I were.  
A blazing star of universal doom  
Should be as lief. Give thanks thy flesh is whole ;  
Then pray unsoundness shew the infirmity  
And poor debilities of blood that, with  
Such bombast, trickles in our veins. I say  
Bodily ailment oft gives spiritual health ;  
And the dead body yields the living soul.  
Only take care lest the rude world and my  
Ghostly directorate, like a nut i' the teeth,  
Crack thee 'twixt opposites. Know me a smith,  
With fire and blast-furnaces, to forge  
Men righteous. *Dies irae, dies illa !*  
*Ab ventura illa.*

(*Exit.*)

WOLFRAM. *De ira ?* We have heard with our ears,  
and a father hath declared unto us, that in Law, Medicine  
and Divinity men will rather be poisoned in Latin than  
saved in the mother-tongue.

ELIZABETH.              Lo, where he is cowed !  
Was it a man ; or was't, as I have heard tell  
Oft, as when figures of a coming act  
Body themselves in vision ?

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

LUDWIG.

Courage !

ELIZABETH.

Well-wishers,

Ye are grave for I am. I will be tyrannous ;  
Rule that ye stretch your mirth full large as mine ;  
Then be top-gallant merry. I implore ye, feast.  
I am ill hostess if my guests be sad.  
This is no bird of prey but, soberly,  
A surgeon to be thanked. My right dear lord,  
I crave a boon ; let me with decent haste  
Hear this good Master Conrad ! it shall be  
Our profit with our pains.

LUDWIG.

With all my heart, dear love,

It was my purpose ; he hath quickly come.  
Some of ye, learn where lies the man of God ;  
He may prove our director from those knotty  
Questions of conscience. We shall not stray.  
Oh, none were stricter guide upon our way !

*(Exeunt the two BRIDES and their GROOMS.)*

WOLFRAM. By the length of our faces, long as  
horses wear,

This is more a funeral than a marriage feast.  
Sir Brewer ! Sir Vintner !

RUDOLPH.

I am Cup-bearer,

Therefore you call me Brewer ?

WOLFRAM.

Sir Vintager.

Mix laughing-potion in the loving-cup.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

RUDOLPH. I have no palate for meat nor drink.

HEINRICH. I sicken.

WALTER. My appetite  
Is fallen away.

RUDOLPH. No wonder, nephew ; his face  
hath soured

The wholesome milk of merriment. God grant  
That no disrelish further come of him.

COUNTESS VON VARILA. Lord Rudolph, my good  
husband, love him not !

COUNTESS VON SAYM. Thou art never at a loss for  
words ; or so givest out ; hast no antidote to this church-  
man who turns us whey-faced, my honey-bright lord ?

WOLFRAM. Not I, good my wife and sweetheart  
Countess ; to it thyself ; as, any day, thy tongue betters  
mine. An the friar cannot be merry, why encumbereth  
he the ground ?

*(Exit OMNES, except CLOWN.)*

CLOWN. Brave wardrobe, mend my paces ! Will I  
home to wife and child ? Will I share, will I ? If I do,  
may I hang, and come to an ill end ; be known for a  
thief, by paying back half I stole. But I will not hang.  
I will lie warm this summer ; drink and be drunken on  
the credit of it, and freeze out the year's end !

*(Exit.)*

## ACT II

SCENE I.—A STREET IN EISENACH. CONRAD'S CELL.

(*Enter CONRAD.*)

CONRAD. In all can be and yet be wife, she swears  
Obedience here. To beget great attempts  
Is great, the rearing of them is stuck  
With little crosses. This is burdensome ;  
Yet if I ever shall be clad in red,  
Then mount Saint Peter's chair, this is the way.  
But emulous appetite and rank desire  
Of pelf and of the flesh, place, fame itself  
Are several kinds of greed ; while power to do  
Judgment or foul iniquity corrupts  
The soul it doth not chasten. *Fiat lux :*  
Let there be light, I have need on't. If ambition  
Show here—where nought should be but godly zeal—  
Sick fear invades, troubles and doth possess

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

My inner man. It is an awful charge,  
Sponsor for souls beside my own. Who comes?

*(Enter a FRIAR.)*

FRIAR. Father, I have the cruse of water, as you bade me, and the black bread.

CONRAD. Bring to the cell. My son, these unruly  
fen men who will pay no tithes, do great cruelty on all  
religious, man and woman, calling darkness light, we  
shall burn them up. After, the taller heads, when  
we are strong, we will put to burning. This ere it  
escape me; early in the morning, get thee to the  
Castle of the Wartburg, and charge the Landgravine's  
women that I do require her presence in our church  
to-morrow, to hear me preach. As now, join me in  
prayer.

*(Exit FRIAR.)*

I bow in prayer, but bowed, must needs avow  
Bowling importeth height wherefrom to bow.

*(Enter WOLFRAM and a KNIGHT with their several  
ATTENDANTS.)*

WOLFRAM. Lo, yonder, as I take it, paces this great  
friar we spake of. Note him well. He walks the town  
o' nights, prying on its frailty.

KNIGHT. Sorcerers, adulterers, thieves, coiners, dicers,  
and friars make day of darkness.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

CONRAD. *Benedicite!*

(*Exit.*)

WOLFRAM. His blessings are curses. No more of him. By luck I return from bidding *speedwell* to the Hunnish lords lately with us.

KNIGHT. You are for me very fortunately met.

WOLFRAM. In happy time, though you come unhappily.

KNIGHT. Yet promise these wars mostly in strategy ; where we show in force, cities open their gates, and princelings lay down their arms. What more dangerous enterprise is in design and contemplation, I glean not, though rumour mutters of Bethlehem delivered ; but that Kaiser Friedrich requires the Landgrave's presence in his Italian wars, I am sorry.

WOLFRAM. Sorrow not a whit. Between my Lady War and my Lady Peace, man is an inconstant lover with a predilection for the absent. Which absence were, to my thinking, itself a blessed state. Our wise Elizabeth, lately, at the high table tastes no morsel but what to a do it her personality pays for it, not charged upon the revenue ; she starves on crusts and a cup of water else ; nor nothing will but entertain yon same monstrous crow, a piebald Dominican turns the world topsy-turvy.

KNIGHT. These Dominicans leave the nations in no



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

ignorance of their doings ; their founder, with de Montfort, hath by now so quelled the Waldenses in Languedoc, as that heresies quail, and Christendom stands secure. Beyond doubt, Conrad, as I know you mean, is of the self-same stock militant, flaming in love of holy Church and his holy Order.

WOLFRAM. The devil gripe him ! He flames, but not in love. Believe it, he is a man violent in spleen, and of an overbearing humour ; though lieutenant of the Papacy, it is deceived in him ; he makes his piety his cloak, yet shrewd wit pierces through it ; a very inordinate incarnation of wickedness in the grave-clothes of sadness. Is your need instant ?

KNIGHT. In the matter of at once.

WOLFRAM. It is late ; their lights are quenched. Lie at my house, and change apparel, I beseech thee, sir ; and betimes in the morning wait upon the Landgrave.

KNIGHT. I shall rest your debtor.

WOLFRAM. Shall we pass ?

(*Excunt OMNES.*)

SCENE II.—ROOM IN THE WARTBURG.

(LUDWIG *in a bed*—ELIZABETH.)

ELIZABETH. No streak in the East. On high, the  
dancing stars

Are pitilessly bright. I will hide them. So.  
That is St. Peter's fowl, awake ere dawn  
Belike with cold. Crow, cock ! Upon bare boards,  
Within an angler's cast of heart's ease,  
I ache and smart till daybreak. Sweet temptation,  
God made thee fair. But what if heavenly spouse,  
For I am not wholly His, smite earthly spouse ?  
Jealousy ? An angel slew the child in the cradle  
Because the mother doated on 't. To slip—  
Sure, unanathematized joy—to slip  
Down the easy stream, and with the most of the world,  
Let custom's mill-race run ? I can resist  
Custom, not heart's desire. Ye guardian Powers  
That refresh our souls, unstop my deaf-adder ears !

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Ye do ! For now  
How clear I catch the canticle divine !  
"Holy, holy, holy," upon the wing  
The rapturous angels chant, and hover round  
The meek Madonna and her infant child.

(*Enter* ISENTRUDE.)

ISENTRUDE. Oh, my lord, pardon !

LUDWIG. You thought to wake your lady ?

ISENTRUDE. She straitly charged me touch her feet,  
lest she overlie her hour. I have awaked my lord, in  
error for my lady.

LUDWIG. I pardon my waking, easier than afore-  
thought to break her rest.

(*Exit* ISENTRUDE.)

She hath very oft prayed herself asleep on her mat ;  
saying after, *Though eyelid drop, yet can I tear me from  
my bed.*

ELIZABETH. The Song of Songs which is Solomon's  
Figureth Christ in love.

LUDWIG (*To* ELIZABETH). What, faithless ?

ELIZABETH. Is it my shame to feel no shame ?  
If I scent foulness, am I the more clean ?  
All is pure unto the pure (*Aside*).

LUDWIG. Faithless ? The pact was made  
Henceforth I share thy watchful orisons.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Teach me to pray. I kneel here by thy side.

Aha ! More merciless than Justice, ha ?

Who did this ?

ELIZABETH.                      My maidens. I it was ; they  
wept to strike.

LUDWIG. Elizabeth, pain is laid upon thy sex ;  
Ye have enough of it. Horror melts to pity,  
And pity falls to womanish drops.

ELIZABETH.                      I will kiss them dry.

LUDWIG. Thy scourged flanks should, for their  
tenderness,

Put on the hard of the ship-splitting rock  
That in the Maelstroms of the deep, rebutting  
The termless battery of the hostile sea,  
Lashed never so, feels nought.

ELIZABETH.                      “ My yoke is easy.”

LUDWIG.                      Jewel among flints  
Among all famous Queens, ravish my soul  
To adoration ; gold among a hoard  
Of dusky pennies ; coral among growth  
Of the sea-tangle ; abstinence becomes thee  
Comelier than wit and wiles. Roses and thorns—  
Our sacramental union—stings and honey  
Are not more hived together, than desire  
To possess and to let be. But children—

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

A matron's glory, and a spinster's shame—  
Children? It follows then——

ELIZABETH. To glory in our shame.

LUDWIG. Naked and not ashamed

Was the first bridal.

ELIZABETH. Husband,

I strive no more against thee—flesh of my flesh,  
Bone of my bone, what the church joins, let none  
Put asunder.

LUDWIG. Sanctify me !

ELIZABETH. The morning is at hand.

Go to ; our guests will see we are watchers. Bathe  
Our brows ; so to the world seem not to fast.  
Comb my hair ; perfume me. Joyous Gard knew none  
Blither amid its bebies. Not in spirits ?  
I'll laugh the gayest beauty out of breath,  
With but a trice of jesting. Ludwig, ha ?  
There is promise in thine eyes.

LUDWIG. Shut thine.

*(He clasps upon her a jewelled ornament.)*

Take up thy glass.

ELIZABETH. You set me full of gems.

LUDWIG. As cunning artists

Set foil round visages so glorious pure  
Glory is but background.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

ELIZABETH.                      Gifts, when I looked for none !  
I love surprisals.

ISENTRUDE (*Within*). My lord ! My lord, my lord,  
my lord !

LUDWIG. How now ? What is a-doing ?

(*Re-enter ISENTRUDE, with WOLFRAM.*)

WOLFRAM. My lord and lady, there is arrived a noble  
knight of the Emperor's, ridden in haste. The gentle  
knight makes tarrying only for array, and to ask admittance,  
for the delivery of great matters.

LUDWIG. Lord Saym, I will forthwith hear the Kaiser's  
deliverance, in due form. Good boys, there, my pages,  
awake !

(*Enter PAGES.*)

Pardon me, my sister ; courtesy answers haste with no  
delay. At the worst, as I know not what is toward, a  
priest, a pure priest, a priest that hath my love, our chosen  
Conrad shall bulwark home.

(*Exit with WOLFRAM and PAGES.*)

ELIZABETH. What is the matter, hear you ? I will  
forth and know. Forebodings, do ye run to meet trouble  
half-way, crying, *Gethsemane, not Eden ?* Tire me.

(*Exit.*)

ISENTRUDE. With a good will ! One of the friars is  
this morning with me, charging my lady that she hear

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

the Master preach. He went about on his heel with,  
*My message delivered, only remains that I return unto  
Master Conrad that sent me.* And she hath sworn obedience. Obedience, obedience? It is brief as marriage, to make such vows as she hath made; only death's departure breaketh such up. Yet on this immediate day's demand of her, she must, surely, give the Kaiser's missive audience? The friar's bidding may slip my memory, let him preach mightily.

*(Exit.)*

SCENE III.—IN THE WARTBURG.

(*Enter* LUDWIG, SOPHIA, COUNTESS VON VARILA,  
the EMPEROR'S KNIGHT, WOLFRAM and COUNTESS  
VON SAYM, the FOOL and other ATTENDANTS.)

LUDWIG. Courtesy is the due of a man's pride ; it springs the less from kindness. A churl hath often kindness, while a knight is oft rapacious, cruel and covetous ; yet is the one very courteous knight, the other churl.

KNIGHT. Dread mine host, and soul of courtesy, my master's needs are more peremptory than he ; Thuringen, a chief pen of the Imperial flight, Thuringen away, left our Kaiser as if an eagle with one wing clipt.

LUDWIG. I must too abruptly to war's affairs. I would leave you in my lady's charge. Who hath seen my Elizabeth ?

KNIGHT. Our beauteous hostess is a host in herself.

LUDWIG. I must not praise mine own. Where hideth Elizabeth ?



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

SOPHIA. She hath retired herself since the earliest morn.

COUNTESS VON VARILA. Dread lord, 'tis true ; my lady, in her bower  
Sitting most dolorous at thy call away,  
Looked on the town, with grievous moan and sigh ;  
Then nought would serve but, through the postern  
slipt,

She sought the wretches even face to face,  
That harbour in it, rueful for their estate.

SOPHIA. Who knows if she be back ?

ELIZABETH (*Within*). Ludwig, my beloved !  
(*Enter, in her smock and unshod, ELIZABETH.*)

Sell all that thou hast, and give, give, give !  
Oh, shame to greatness ! Blush for it ; ye are gilt  
With the life-blood of poverty, not with gold.  
Wash, wash, and call your almoners. Know ye  
What there is in the world ? I have probed home :  
There is wickedness and want. This is stale news,  
As old as Adam.

SOPHIA. Modesty, hide thy face !

COUNTESS VON SAYM. Like the needle, she clothes  
others, herself but bare.

WOLFRAM. Send we our Landgravine to Coventry !  
This is as Lady Godiva's charity

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

That overruled good manners when she went on  
That ride for the poor.

KNIGHT. Mammon is a foul fiend, riches our snare.

ELIZABETH. Lay not our sin on gold, the noble gold,  
Charity's handmaid, gold, the staff of age,  
Gold, the floor of Heaven, the metal of her harps,  
The pigment wherewithal we glorify  
Even the godhead. 'Tis hypocrisy,  
When we have sullied what ourselves misuse,  
Attaints the instrument ; is the murderer's knife  
Blameworthy, and not he ?

LUDWIG. You take a chill ; I pray you,  
My little sister. (*Cloaks her with his mantle.*)

ELIZABETH. Who is it made my town  
A warren full of apes ?

LUDWIG. How came you without your shoes ?

ELIZABETH. A den of thieves !  
A den of thieves !

LUDWIG. Were you robbed in the street ?

ELIZABETH. Mistake me not, Ludwig ; within my  
bower

I waxed rebellious, asking  
Why are we vexed with this call to part  
Upon a sudden hap ? Why ? Look and see.  
These fellow-townsmen of ours have no homes.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

LUDWIG. The shaming truth ; our hounds we house them better.

ELIZABETH.                   Yea, and lest  
Our Heavenly Father rive ours in the midst,  
Enjoyed while many mouths are empty,  
We must learn where we may.   Good my guests  
  hear—

Lest blessings do anneal the breast—listen—  
Home is above rubies—do ye mark ?—  
I thrid our lanes, our gutters ; searched, like wounds,  
Blind alleys that cried out for tendance.   Children,—  
Nay, they were hobgoblins, fairies on evil days  
Fallen, all joy departed—my heart bled,—  
Children and swine rooted for offal, wading  
In curdled mud.

LUDWIG.                   Comfort thee, comfort thee.

ELIZABETH. Tiles dropt away from the ridge ! Branded  
  with eld

Ere she was young, a mother hugged two boys ;  
And all three coughed together.   Say we not  
*A church-yard cough ?*   They shook to the backbone.

SOPHIA.                   Eve, wilt thou learn of evil ?  
What can we do ?

ELIZABETH.                   What could I ?  
Buckle my shoes upon her chilblained feet.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

I did divest me to my smock, and gave  
Those warm disguises of my state, to hide  
Her shivering disgrace. There is too much misery  
In one town for the world ; rivers of love  
Might sink there, sucked in sand.

*(Enter CONRAD, followed by ISENTRUDE, GUTA and  
THEKLA.)*

CONRAD. I am the wrath of God,  
That rends an oak tree, or picks up a pin,  
Smallest or hugest task.

THEKLA. Are you hell-fire ?

ELIZABETH. Hail, Master Conrad ;  
Why do you stride upon me, like a fell  
And fierce invader ? Is there war declared ?

LUDWIG. Our licensed scourge.

ELIZABETH. Shall we not suffer him ?  
As our resolve was, give him way ?

CONRAD. Humility  
Trampling the pride of pageantry with pride ?  
A smock ? What of thine oath ? Have I required  
Vows of obedience ? Which, paid free-will,  
Free-will cannot recant.

ELIZABETH. Good master, I am ignorant  
Wherein I do offend.

CONRAD. Thou bidden guest,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

This forenoon I required thee come to church.

I sent no sleepy messenger.

ELIZABETH. Was there a message?

ISENTRUDE. We passed it by, as matter of no  
moment,

Upon the sudden coming of affairs.

ELIZABETH. I see that we may fall

By them that love. Preserve me from my friends.

Where to begin? What shall I do to be saved?

Shrink not from me, Thekla; art timorous?

The chief of all is lovely Charity—

Whose kingdom come! Poor child, (*To THEKLA*)

What shall I do?

THEKLA. I know which side my bread is buttered, and  
I can catch mice with my fingers.

ELIZABETH. Fling thine arms round about her,  
Isentrude.

Thekla, thou vessel of eternal pity,

I am thine handmaid. Go ye, sirrah, forth,

My folk; think on our smoking flesh-pots; go

Gather me in the halt, the maimed, the blind!

Compel them to come in. Highways and hedges

Depopulate of squalid wretchedness;

For loathsome and incurable disease,

Ransack the hospitals, and make my home

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

A leper squint-hole, but I will work out  
My own salvation. Is it so hard ?  
I'll minister to slaves, loose prisoners ;  
There shall be no more beggars in the land ;  
Bounty shall die out ; from no dearth of gifts,  
But no more want. I will pull down our schools  
For larger ; and do good undreamed about  
In wisdom or romance, to put i' the shade  
Fabulous prodigies. But at the least—  
But we fall short—Ludwig, is't said and done ?—  
We'll match the court of Soldan Saladin  
Who in his Moslem error counted holy  
The outcast maniac. Oh, that I had  
The Fortunate Purse, to revel it in alms !

*(Exit, and at the other door exeunt SERVANTS, followed by  
FOOL.)*

LUDWIG. O follow, follow ; all attend her hests ;  
Brew fomentations or what else she will,  
Infusions, tinctures, in near readiness !  
Father, we are for Italy to-morrow ;  
Be our good Angel, weld our metals, as  
Our hope is, in a joint prosperity.  
*(Exeunt LUDWIG, SOPHIA, COUNTESS VON VARILA and  
ATTENDANTS.)*

ISENTRUDE. Master, the fault is ours.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

CONRAD. Ye shall have disciplines.

*(Exit.)*

THEKLA. What he calls disciplines we call whipping.

*(Re-enter FOOL with BEGGAR BOY.)*

FOOL. A beggar from the door. Come thou with the scaldhead.

*(Exit.)*

ISENTRUDE. For of such is the kingdom of Heaven.

*(Excunt ISENTRUDE, GUTA and THEKLA with the Boy.)*

WOLFRAM. Yonder I see

A crew of filthy clowns whose uncouth gait

Labours to keep pace with our serving-men ;

Who herds them should go limping-lame as they.

*(Re-enter FOOL and SERVANTS with GRETHEL and other poor folk.)*

FOOL. Alley and court and garret ! This way, masters !

KNIGHT. Millennium government ! I muse if ever  
Enchanted castle were so much transformed.

COUNTESS VON SAYM. I'll move the Margrave  
Heinrich to a protest.

WOLFRAM. The palace grows a pest-house.

*(Exit, with his COUNTESS and the KNIGHT.)*

FIRST CLOWN *(Carried in on a mattress)*. Curses  
upon our heads ! Canst tell why are our creaking limbs,

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

in this posting haste, brought hither? 'Twas *Take up thy bed and walk*, with me?

SECOND CLOWN. 'Twas *Trudge*, with me, having bed nor bedding.

FIRST CLOWN. Blue flies blow her o' the lips for't! Why should she have the wherewithal to give, and we need to thank?

FOOL. A Jacob's ladder to come to Heaven on; not one of you so proud but should kiss himself, an she so much as tread upon him. There shall be drawn up an inventory, attested by Justices of the Peace, what full complement of legs, arms or brains are missing to you. To begin here; this is no nimble-wit; he carries his one jest on his back, bunched like a camel; this is a merry-maker against his own will.

DWARF. They have baited me to tears before now.

FOOL. Oh, ye deserve the whip for looking so hungry.

DWARF. Blessed be the good Elizabeth! May our Landgravine be hung with diamonds, drawn in a chariot of horses, and quartered in Heaven.

FOOL. That is *hung, drawn* and *quartered*.

DWARF. Oh, to-day as she passed me by in the street, her eyes lay kindly upon me; nay, in sooth, masters. I shall warrant her for a good woman. 'Tis my fancy, but I



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shall fatten on 't, anon ; and fill out on it ; I, a mite, who am in shape a toad, and no man, with fingers not set aright on my hands, nor my toes aright on my feet.

FOOL. Oh, voluble microcosm !

DWARF. Nay, sir ; Heaven mend me, a poor knave, and my gabardine too, which is more holey than righteous.

FOOL. Oh, Rumpelstiltskin, oh, crookshanks ; and, i' faith, my good brethren in potentiality, all ye shall be dried by the apothecary, as monstrous freaks of nature.

GRETHEL (*Strikes FOOL*). Quotha ? So !

FOOL. A groat for a broken shin ! If I bestow a groat, how mayst thou thrive by the rich ? Yonder walks the Margrave ; salute him with the like salutation, thou art made for life.

GRETHEL. 'Shall turn my money three times, and spit on't.

SECOND CLOWN. Hamstring him, Grethel ! Thou goest to earn a right warm back (*Aside*).

FIRST CLOWN. An uplander, and none of ours !

SECOND CLOWN. 'Tis goody Grethel, a simple wife.

FOOL. Broken ribs mend my shin's smarting ! Whip her up, my Lord Heinrich, to a frisked egg !

(*Enter HEINRICH, with WOLFRAM, COUNTESS VON SAYM and the EMPEROR'S KNIGHT.*)

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

HEINRICH. Ludwig hath given this countenance?  
We will tax Elizabeth. But in what terms?

WOLFRAM. In the high jargon of dishclouts, none  
other, dread my lord. Invite her to the kitchen to  
screen cinders.

(GRETHEL *cuts* HEINRICH *behind the knees*.)

GRETHEL. Largesse, largesse; noble sirs!

HEINRICH. What, i' the fiend's name, slave?

(*Re-enter* ELIZABETH, *with* ISENTRUDE, GUTA, THEKLA  
*and the* BEGGAR BOY, CONRAD, LUDWIG, SOPHIA,  
COUNTESS VON VARILA *and* ATTENDANTS.)

Dam of the devil?

ELIZABETH. What is the meaning, brother,  
You hold that wretch up by the rags?

HEINRICH. A hag, a besotted hag!

GRETHEL. Drunkenness burst thee, and drown thee, too!

ELIZABETH. Give me an answer, Heinrich.  
Grant her unwomanly, will rudeness tame  
The vixen of neglect in her?

HEINRICH. By my father's soul, she houghs me  
behind the knee; then presents her charge like a tailor.  
Crop her ears, sirrah!

ELIZABETH. Thou shalt not hurt her; not a hair  
that's hers  
Shall suffer by a hair's breadth.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

HEINRICH. Ear-mark her for thy minion ;  
I nought begrudge thee her. Seal her of thy  
tribe.

FOOL. Friend, thou hast my groat ; let us drink  
together.

GRETHEL. Scurvy jackanapes !

ELIZABETH. Woman, whose ragged need  
Being supplied quickens thy thankfulness,  
More blessed is to give ; which makes the rich  
Blessed in giving, but the poor be poor  
In the receipt of gifts,  
Mine's a sweet profit will accrue by thee.  
Here be thy home. Thekla, thou art meek in work ;  
Fetch me more lint.

*(Exit THEKLA.)*

Bless us to the work,  
And the work to us. For this tormented soul,  
Someone's son who hath to step-dam the open street,  
Bind his head fast in the towel ; the sore is washed ;  
Turn not askew, maidens, foul is made fair.  
Comfort the sick, rebuke vice, cleanse the vile.  
In which repulsive industry and task  
Inglorious, to everlasting glory,  
Touch pitch, yet, touching, are we undefiled.  
GUTA. You smile where we turn faint.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Christ loveth a cheerful giver ; and on earth  
Thy people bless thy shadow on the wall.

ELIZABETH.                      Then never name  
Good deeds their own reward, when at this rate  
Love salaries them richly ; for men's hearts  
Go out to the good. Do men love murderers,  
And lawless thieves ? Or rather alms-givers  
And benefactors ? To be righteous  
Unrecompensed !—The very thought defames  
Heaven's equity—yet if we taste Heaven's bliss  
We are hirelings. Oh ! I must begin anew ;  
I will build hospitals, and be a founder,  
More name than woman.

CONRAD.                      That is a gracious word.

ELIZABETH. Am I confessed ?

CONRAD.                      Confessed and clean absolved.

ELIZABETH. Then am I for May-pole and Morris  
bells.

CONRAD (*Aside*).              Thou art frozen in my grip,  
As to the chin thou stood'st in solid ice !

(*Exit.*)

ELIZABETH. Oh, for Saint Cecily's pipes, her stops  
and keys !  
Blow, fancy's organ, loudly ! Wondering guests,  
We'll be young while we may ; be not cast down.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Now hide and seek from floor to battlement.  
Brother mine, hide with me. Seek high, seek low !  
Let slight the mistletoe-bough but he who bares  
A guilty conscience ; we will have snap-dragon,  
And fortune-telling by candles—and story-telling !  
But in the midst break off in our delight,  
And holy reverie possess us quite.  
Ah ! I forgot thee ; in the baptistry,  
I'll bring thy babe unto the font myself.  
Isentrude, feed my sheep. Fie, what a lapse !  
No pastime ours, until all warble forth  
A general psalm of mirth ; till then, to service !  
Good mother, I will wash thee white as wool.  
Give me thy hand. Hang on my arm. Look up.

GRETHEL. May thy shadow never grow less !

FIRST CLOWN. A poor man's blessing upon thee !

GRETHEL (*Aside*). A murrain on her wash-tub ! An if  
Grethel were Landgravine, it should be ordered other-  
wise.

(*Exeunt* LUDWIG and ELIZABETH, *with* ISENTRUDE, GUTA  
*and all the poor folk*, SOPHIA, *the* EMPEROR'S KNIGHT,  
WOLFRAM, COUNTESS VON VARILA, COUNTESS VON  
SAYM, FOOL and ATTENDANTS.)

HEINRICH. To strap this madness down ! But all  
the while,

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

I, being younger brother, am not first,  
Stomach it well or ill. How relisheth Ludwig  
These folk with the rot, glanders, red mange, and  
thrush?

(*Enter THEKLA.*)

THEKLA. I carry lint. My lady will need it all of a  
cold morning.

HEINRICH. This is a tame wild-cat.

THEKLA. Oh, I never wash my face in early dew, to  
clear freckles, now. I used to lap milk like a dog. Now  
I lift up my head as sparrows do, and thank the kind  
saints for it.

HEINRICH. Puss !

THEKLA. Give me good time of day, sweeting.

HEINRICH. Thou art a ripe wood pigeon. She wags  
her curly head as a hound wags his tail.

THEKLA. I am wide awake. The dear Elizabeth, she  
'ticeth me as boys catch tits with grain ! To market, to  
market !

HEINRICH. Is't so, Will o' the Wisp, Thekla ? Shall  
we to the woods together, bird-nesting ?

THEKLA. I will to heel. But it is unlucky to rob  
Cock Robin and Jennie Wren. Their eggs are little as  
whortleberries.

HEINRICH. When ? Steal thy Lady Mistress' hand-

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

glass, behind her back, and peer in it? Thou'rt buxom ;  
any man's fancy might board and lodge with thee. So,  
that red scarlet colour is a brag ; thou'rt mine. (*Aside.*)  
And when the stomach turns there is a crude sickliness  
in sweetness.

THEKLA (*Sings*). “*Sing, dance a gay lady!*”  
(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE IV.—CREMONA.

(*Enter* LUDWIG, RUDOLPH *and* WALTER.)

RUDOLPH. You hear the news of the camp, my lord, here in Cremona?

LUDWIG. A Crusade preached? My very dear friends and knights—that my liege lord Friedrich will call me to his banner I do know—I charge you, from wrong and oppression, if need be, with dear life's blood, ye guard my Elizabeth.

RUDOLPH *and* WALTER. We will.

LUDWIG. Nay, I dread great need may be.

RUDOLPH. My lord, we are pledged.

WALTER. We are pledged, my lord.

LUDWIG. But, come what come will?

RUDOLPH. Through thick and thin!

LUDWIG. That I am from her side through this dry dearth; and she single-handed when our land worst, but all Germany is pinched! 'Twas wise she bought grain from the Jews of Köln.



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

RUDOLPH. What husbandry she holds, under guidance of the great Dominican !

LUDWIG. That, with a certain portion baked daily, which she herself gave to each, to his need, her granaries sufficed through the summer ; till at harvest, she sends every man into the field with sickle and scythe in hand, to every man gives a shirt and pair of shoon. Now she writes me, on famine's trail treads plague. Death sweats at his work, bating with every-day the sad dignity of dying, qualified to no account. But my housewife shows the pest hospitality in hospitals ; one wholly for children, at all times her most delight. She writes, " When I go among them, they cling about my skirts, crying, *Mother, mother !* " We call " acts of God " famines, pestilences and earthquakes ; and see the devil's work in the sick healed, the lame walking, the blind with sight, the dead raised and the very devil himself cast out.

WALTER. I hear it, my lord, veritably, on thy parting, thy lady shrouds in total black or varied at most with a veil of pure whiteness, as if rehearsing for a tragedy ; so is her prayerful forecast—be it mistook !—thou art fated to die afar.

RUDOLPH. Only on thy advent, will she robe and crown.

LUDWIG. Thank Heaven for her love ! Now to take

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

our seat at this Diet. Conrad hath done well at Eisenach.  
Go before——

*(Exeunt RUDOLPH and WALTER.)*

There is more news besides, hope of an heir.

*(Enter ITALIAN WOMAN.)*

What would you, Damoisele?

WOMAN. I fear thy haughtiness.

LUDWIG. Fear not me.

WOMAN. Thou lovest raven hair.

LUDWIG. Well?

WOMAN. Thy host's messenger was unfortunate; he was bid seek out beauty, and he brought back this face. I am not free to depart, thy host constrains me to thee. Am I not a poor captive?

LUDWIG. Yes. I see thy drift. Here is gold, lest want again tempt thee to sin. Go thy way.

WOMAN. I blush like a maid. This gold hath bought me virtue. I will not paint again; my eye may flash if it can, or be extinguished. Let me have ewer and basin!

*(Exit.)*

LUDWIG. From mine host in Cremona here? A bastard courtesy! Though God condemned not, nor man blamed not, would home-love possess me continent.

*(Exit.)*

SCENE V.—WOODS ABOVE EISENACH.

(*Enter* CONRAD *and* FRIAR.)

CONRAD. This oratory stands high in these woods, overhanging Eisenach ; the ways are steep and slippery.

FRIAR. Our dear Landgravine will be here upon her hour. With what abundance at need she succoured her people.

CONRAD. Simple !

It is an easy thing, out of a surfeit,  
To spare a little ; and the recipient,  
Weighed with his neighbour who perhaps hath none,  
Hath wrongfully too much. But she shall learn  
With toil to merit even daily bread.  
Men rob their brethren else. Her wealth shall stand  
In terms fiducial for the common weal,  
In the Dominican name. Go on before,  
To the altar, brother ; I officiate.

(*Exit* FRIAR.)

My master-passion is desire of rule

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Over this age's history ; but first  
And chief, to dominate Elizabeth,  
A lamb, a dove, whom studying, I become  
Almost a lover ; certainly I am  
Her lord and master more than Ludwig is,  
Without appeal, mercy nor question.  
That here religion and desire do take  
The self-same road is all as true as that  
Whether I act for God's sake or mine own  
I dare not dive into. In doubt, we use  
Obstinacy for firmness, on the chance  
Adventuring destinies. My watchword is  
Instant activity, making man a seraph  
Indomitable ; work is my shibboleth.  
So much is done, so much remains to do  
I have callipered. The Landgrave's liberal pen  
Abetting what he spake to her, gives scope  
And means of action—to my pure joy,  
It should be. Strong cupidity ! What follows  
But one thing more ? To aggravate my power—  
This is beyond confession's secrecy,  
Confessing to myself who will not hear—  
To aggravate, swell and augment my pride,  
To please my jealous envy, who forswore  
And spurned the happy lot which I disdain,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Yet covet it, she shall in due time swear  
Further, because to her connubial state—  
Lest her two babes seduce her from the Way  
Peculiar and holy—for she is a mother—  
Hence under suasion shall she be sworn  
To live beside him in celibacy  
Disconsolately chaste. Shortly to do it ;  
Or Rome's letters to hand turn me aside.  
Within our sanctuary, at stroke of twelve,  
She consecrates to Heaven her daughters. Firmly  
I gain ground, inch by inch.

(*Exit.*)

(*Enter HEINRICH and THEKLA.*)

THEKLA (*Sings*).

*All the birds of the air fell a-sighing and a-sobbin'  
When they heard the bell toll for poor Cock Robin.*

HEINRICH. These pine-needles are better than our  
sheets ;

For when we have done evil, they will hide  
The evil we have done, out of our sight.  
Good girl, I will kill thee now.

THEKLA. What do I amiss ?

This is to die a maid all but a minute.  
Marry come up, but thou art sweet as gall !  
Bury me in leaves, ye Robin Redbreasts !

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

HEINRICH.                      Grant I am not seasoned,  
I have not to make the voyage. Art thou ready?  
Ready or no, thou goest.

THEKLA.                      God ha' mercy,  
Give me kind words.

HEINRICH. No more now.

THEKLA.                      My kerchief over my head?  
Stifle me in my kerchief, la?

HEINRICH.                      Thou art not the first served so;  
Nor the first I have so served. Cross thyself!  
Fence me, ye saints above! What is it comes?  
A winding-sheet that walks?

THEKLA.                      Fetch a long breath again!

HEINRICH. It is no ghost.  
The charnel sweat of grave-yards I have felt,  
And shuddered at before. Thekla,  
Thou wilt not blab our secret. Thou shalt live.  
But speak, and I care not.

*(They retire themselves.)*

*(Enter ELIZABETH with alms-dish. Two CHILDREN carried  
by ISENTRUDE and GUTA.)*

ELIZABETH.                      Fresh air, fresh air,  
Fresh air, after the pest! Blocks that we are,  
We leave the heavens pagan. Fie,  
I would, if it were given me to name

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

A new-discovered constellation,  
Christen it the *Holy Rood* ; or some five stars  
The *Stigmata*. What time is it o'clock ?

GUTA. It is the hour 'twixt two days of the week.

ELIZABETH. Pray for me and my husband, and for these,  
O my devout, dear friends, these loans of heaven.

ISENTRUDE. Why wilt thou dedicate thy babes by  
night ;  
Or bear the alms-dish heaped with tempting gold  
Throughout the dangerous and lonely woods ?

ELIZABETH. No creature in the world would do me  
harm ;

Be certain. Now I am churched,  
This offertory comes. Oh, happiness  
Too full and wonderful ! lest I forget to pray,  
And to ascribe the glory where glory is due,—  
The curse of blessedness,—within yon oratory  
Fit for untroubled thought,  
With twinkling taper lit, with the scant pence  
Which are almost all I have left me, I will show  
My twin-born maids ; even in the dead of night,  
Offering them unto Eternity.

(*Exit, with ISENTRUDE, GUTA and the CHILDREN.*)

HEINRICH. I am botched with shame. Thou art in  
sanctuary.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

There is more shame in murdering a woman,  
Than hers in sinning. Yon anointed saint  
Hath saved thy life ; her neighbourhood aweth  
My guilty hand ; I dare not stain her precincts  
With the foul crime of murder. Haste, go free.

*(Exit THEKLA.)*

But when the court growls, will I growl as deep ;  
For though confounded, do I not repent.  
Oh, I am crushed, seeing one so innocent !  
Still most I hate what most is from my bent.

*(Exit.)*





## ACT III

### SCENE I.—BEFORE THE WARTBURG.

(*Enter CLOWNS, GRETHEL and others of Eisenach. Then, with sound of trumpet, enter WALTER; and, above, LEUTOLF and WOLFRAM.*)

WALTER. My Lord Castellan, come down upon my summons, and open the gates to our prince.

(*Exeunt LEUTOLF and WOLFRAM.*)

(*Enter, below, LUDWIG, RUDOLPH and HARTWIG, with FORCES. CLOWNS and others cry "A Ludwig, a Ludwig!" Re-enter, below, LEUTOLF and WOLFRAM, with HEINRICH.*)

HEINRICH. All hail from the road's peril !

LUDWIG. Faithfully welcomed ! In happy time of day ! Where is my lady ? Greetings, brother. Good my counts, wardens of home and marches in my busy absence ! What of my black swan of Hungary ? How fares my dear lady ?

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

LEUTOLF. Ask for more than thy lady, good my lord.  
(*Enter, above, ELIZABETH with her two DAUGHTERS, attended; ISENTRUDE and GUTA. CLOWNS cry—*  
“*The Blessed Elizabeth!*” “*Our Good Lady!*”  
“*Mother of us!*”)

LUDWIG. In faith surely. Lo and behold on the wall, the tree and her young branches! Come!

ELIZABETH. Oh, to fly to thee!  
(*Exeunt OMNES from above.*)

HEINRICH. To mingle welcome a little with gravity—  
thrifless givers do in time come a-begging.

LEUTOLF. Let thy stewards' bills speak.

LUDWIG. I will clear them.

HEINRICH. Thou art beggared with loving kindness.

LEUTOLF. Here is the schedule of her nobleness  
thy lady's expenses in charity. Yon hospital of twenty  
beds, founded here at the foot of the Wartburg, for  
poor women; another endowed to Saint Anne, for all  
comers.

LUDWIG. Let her spend all; so she leave me our  
Wartburg, and Naumburg, my castles. See, in the door-  
way! I gave, and it is restored to me a hundred thousand  
fold!

(*Re-enter, below, ELIZABETH attended; her two DAUGHTERS, ISENTRUDE, GUTA, THEKLA and the FOOL.*)

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

ELIZABETH. Shine out, glad sun ; this day is no sorrow ! My brother, these lambkins will prattle to us anon.

LUDWIG. When they know our language. O heart-beats, keep some measure. I choke with joy !

HEINRICH. Nothing in this mood.

RUDOLPH. Leutolf, we have Crusaders' badges about our persons hidden ; not to grieve our wives suddenly.

*(Exeunt, with FORCES, LUDWIG and ELIZABETH, ISENTRUDE and GUTA with the two DAUGHTERS, HEINRICH, RUDOLPH, LEUTOLF, HARTWIG, WOLFRAM and ATTENDANTS, into Castle; CLOWNS, GRETHEL and their sort, as they came.)*

FOOL (*Sings*). " *God rest ye merry, gentlemen.*"

WALTER. How agreed folly and famine ?

FOOL. That usurious Jew, Colon, and his brethren did threat foreclosure. We pay interest to the belly on the loan of life.

WALTER. Man is an hour-glass ; meat and drink, sand.

FOOL. Would I could stand on my head, off and on ; that one dinner should slip up and down. We fared on cheese-rind ; short commons that the commons might gormandise.

WALTER. I' the name of Folly, is the exchequer broke ?

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

FOOL. A fool and his money, soon parted, the experience maketh him wise, while he that hath the guilders falleth asleep. Would I were nodding. Whist ! Our father screech-owl, our raven, our kite that spies every shrew in the stubble, our cormorant starves here yet. If he eat us not as birds, he will eat us as mice ; if he eat us not as mice, as fish ; if not as fish, as horse-radish.

*(Exeunt OMNES.)*

SCENE II.—IN THE WARTBURG.

(*Enter HEINRICH, meeting LEUTOLF and WOLFRAM.*)

LEUTOLF. My lord, sir Prince.

WOLFRAM. Your lordship's, in industry and idleness.

HEINRICH. Shall sanctimony cow us like curs? We have had words, counts. She hath disabled the State with grievous charities and endowments. Divorce were for our baron's good.

LEUTOLF. Ludwig shall hear reason, not detraction.

HEINRICH. Shall he hear it to-day?

WOLFRAM. High time, lest it slip our memories.

LEUTOLF. Yet, again; the friars, being children of light, have this world's wisdom in them; they have holpen the land, to the saving of multitudes alive, by good counsel actively put in practice; and though we make question, as honest auditors, of their reckonings, yet must we hear their answers patiently.

WOLFRAM. Pillars? nay, caterpillars of the Church! The devil a word will we hear! What, out of fashion,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Knead all our barley-meal to dough, till malt  
Might not be had for money for our ale,  
For brewery, to let us parch with gills  
As dry as stock-fish ?

HEINRICH.           And make the rascals thrive  
The dearth was sent to rid us of, von Saym.  
Now in all conscience, Ludwig's house-keeping  
Is to no good end. He in Lombardy,  
The princess, with starvation at court  
Shrunk to a shadow, publicly disbursed  
The means of life scot free, state jewels pawned,  
And sundry farms encumbered ; shortly put,  
Waxt spendthrift out of bounds.

WOLFRAM.           The pages broke the buttery-hatch,  
Larding their fists like monkeys as they are ;  
And, by my sins, my heart went with them to it !  
Leutolf, be spokesman ; I have too long a tongue for it.

LEUTOLF. It is brought to the Landgrave's ear he  
hear us. We wait upon his Highness.

HEINRICH. Behold the chamberer, Conrad. He  
leaves to-day.

(*Enter LUDWIG and ELIZABETH, CONRAD, with BLACK  
FRIARS, RUDOLPH, HARTWIG, WALTER, COUNTESS  
VON VARILA and ATTENDANTS.*)

LUDWIG. Hail, brother !

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

ELIZABETH. Good brother !

HEINRICH. Hail, brother and sister.

ELIZABETH (*To* CONRAD). Then must we say  
farewell.

CONRAD. I came for that.

LUDWIG. Most absolute juror that wouldst find  
Thy cherished and thy chosen worth the flames,  
Yea, kindle voluntary fires of pitch  
To seethe thyself—wherefore I cannot blot  
Thy censorship as base—many inquisitors  
Have come by hidden graves ; a thought to make you,  
Albeit not full of care, yet careful.

CONRAD. Valour is wise when valour  
Knows what is dangerous but feareth not.  
These of our Rule go with me ; our letters explicit,  
Wherein the Holy See appoints I hoe  
Schismatic Germany, and her hot-bed guilt  
Rake over, which your Kaiser sanctions  
In his dependencies ; and the call to it  
Finds me equipped. Ye know, famine and plague  
Buried their myriads, while I heeded more  
Spirituality. So do I now ;  
So in my cure and ministry, so directed  
Against false doctrine, a most callous growth  
In sin, I bear the scalpel to the place



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Of this contagion ; all cities winnowed  
For occult offences ; cleric and lay rendering  
Fearful account to me as Vicar of  
The Apostolic Keys. Elizabeth,  
Thou park, thou garden of the Tree of Life,  
Yet shall my relaxed hand not abdicate  
Authority in absence.

ELIZABETH.                      Ludwig, I pray thee,  
We have debated to agreement, brother,  
And weighed profit and loss. (*Whispers.*)

LEUTOLF.                      Answer, Black Friar ;  
Hast, in thy ministry, known none repent,  
Till their bones melted with remorse, that thou  
Durst brave remorse hereafter ?

RUDOLPH.                      Great Divine,  
How wilt thou stagger, at the Last Day,  
To hear thy judgments set aside !

CONRAD.                      I give men to the secular arm :  
The Lord will know His own.

LUDWIG.                      Master Conrad,  
The vows that are to take, my consort takes them  
Somewhat hastily, since ye so depart.  
The castle chapel is close at hand.

CONRAD.                      Follow me.  
Strengthen her foes about her ; in providence,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Whip her with wrongs, and pitch to rack and ruin  
Her solace, happiness and beauty ; leave her  
The mockery of the day, that she shine forth  
Unto Thy glory, O Heaven !

ELIZABETH. Powder me to dust !  
My womanly hope and passion be a lamb  
Before the shearers dumb. Thou King of kings,  
Favourably with mercy hear my prayer. I go  
To earthly Purgatory. Pray for me.  
Good befall thee.

LUDWIG. My heavenly bride, farewell.  
(*Exeunt, with the FRIARS, CONRAD and ELIZABETH.*)

RUDOLPH. Why do you say farewell, so pointedly ?

LUDWIG. Rudolph von Varila, have we not heard  
Edward the Confessor left a virgin spouse ?  
She goes a wife, comes back to me a nun  
In all but name, and my consent is given.

RUDOLPH. Yet she knows not the cross is in thy purse ?

LUDWIG. No.

Well, sirs my friends, I hear a suit is usward.  
I am vehement in justice, but would curb  
All other vehemence. Appeal to me.  
You have a discontent that would break cover.

LEUTOLF. Call it discontent.

I take it much to heart to be thought staunch.



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Committed to thee ; and a careless flux  
Of all commodity or staple wealth.

HARTWIG. That Friar Anti-Christ should be in court.  
(*Enter SOPHIA and COUNTESS VON SAYM.*)

SOPHIA. What, is a water-spout burst in our home,  
And I not by? Somewhat is said to me.  
Is it a stricter life? Take note, Heaven's Powers,  
I had rather see my darling son a corse  
Than shaven to a monk. If thou work this,  
His Father, Hermann, that was good to thee,  
Turns in his grave to rebuke it.

LUDWIG. Beseech thee, peace ;  
For I am harassed much.

ELIZABETH. Peace, mother, I implore.  
To the charge, Count Leutolf.

LEUTOLF. I find a true bill.

COUNTESS VON SAYM. Easier than meet it !

WOLFRAM. Pawned gems and mortgages  
Rained cataracts of yellow gold to spend ;  
And yet her purse weighs with the thief's who made  
Restitution sevenfold.

HEINRICH. Conrad of Marpurg's in 't.  
To hear the fellow prate bursts me with spleen !

LEUTOLF. I could be that man's death.

HARTWIG. A brown bill to hand, and split his crown !

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

WOLFRAM. That were to put him in a brown study !  
A split crown, too ? That makes him a mitred abbot !

LUDWIG. What sayest, Elizabeth ?

ELIZABETH. Mean ye this ?

Heinrich and all ? Set out my sin, in state,  
Where I can see it. Can I recall my gifts ?  
I would not recall one. Among our pens,  
No sheep is lost painstaking care could fold ;  
Thanks to my crook.

I am a boastful shepherd, but the friars are  
Excellent pastors. I who durst spare  
Nothing my husband's substance, nothing spare  
The rod for it. So I plead guilty.

LUDWIG. Thy plea is thy defence.

Humble yourselves, for I am angry, lords.  
A noble rashness doth in warfare well ;  
And shall do in the store-house. That succeeds  
Which, as in scorn of counsel, justifies hope  
Against all precedent. There is a thrift  
In generosity rulers should make  
Their own peculiar, learn and digest,  
More than the common, being thereto obliged ;  
In great wealth to be broadly bountiful,  
Sinking foundations to the liberal arts,  
Letters and learning sacred and profane,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

In every branch, as abundance pricks them on ;  
Also, by parity, in threadbare times  
Of straitened means, out of provision made,  
To feed the hungry, clothe the naked, as  
Always impulsive to be fair and true.  
It is the lore that princes ought to know,  
Against a tale of numbers minishing,  
Lest paucity eat up our multitude,  
Prudence and our good swords our coffers fill,  
But breed not soldiers.

HARTWIG.

We stand abashed.

LEUTOLF.

I am very sorry, Lady.

*(Exit.)*

ELIZABETH. Go to him, good Count Rudolph.

RUDOLPH *(Aside)*. Ill-timed these lords' attack.

LUDWIG.

Ye are answered, lords.

Bestow the morn on yourselves. Speak Leutolf fair,  
Rudolph ; his honesty is not offence.

With a large hand I make my wealth her slave.

*(Exeunt RUDOLPH, HARTWIG, WALTER and  
ATTENDANTS.)*

And, gentle brother, understand our will.

HEINRICH. So help me ; or, failing, be I accursed !  
*(To WOLFRAM)* King Log she hath, King Stork I  
hope she shall have.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

WOLFRAM. Dislike  
Sleeps as a cat with one eye open yet.  
(*Excunt HEINRICH and WOLFRAM.*)

SOPHIA. Daughter and Son,  
Here show ye both alike magnanimous fools !  
(*Exit.*)

ELIZABETH. Leave us, Ladies.  
(*Excunt COUNTESS VON VARILA, COUNTESS VON SAYM  
and other LADIES attendant.*)

I am a ghost, a shadow, a glory  
Departed. But—let me be lavish, love ;  
Trust me with sterling pieces, minted dross,  
Dross, dross that is all we have now.

LUDWIG. Be my treasurer still ; since thou art still  
My best of treasures.

ELIZABETH. Then must I bear your purse.

LUDWIG. No, not my purse.

ELIZABETH. Why this is lend and steal !  
Money, to deluge earth with benefits !  
You make my treasury like the command  
Of beardless princes in commission  
Holding the manage of their fathers' powers,  
While wily age rideth as general  
To wield the baton for inexperienced youth.  
Nay, give me the reality of rule.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

LUDWIG. Spend all I gave you from the Jews of  
Köln.

ELIZABETH. All's spent. My chapel on the Eisenthal  
Is sum and substance of it. Cross this palm  
With gold and silver.

LUDWIG. I will ask my steward ;  
He shall provide thee.

ELIZABETH. Our stewards are poor men.  
I'll have thy purse. Nay, now I do perceive  
Thou hast bought trinkets for me. Oh, thy promise,  
Thy promise was to buy me none such toys ;  
And art ashamed.

LUDWIG. The purse I need myself.

ELIZABETH. I'll see't !

LUDWIG. Do not.

ELIZABETH. Why this is married courtship.  
This is years married.

LUDWIG. They hatch out cockatrice eggs  
Under a grey toad—I will tell you a tale,—  
*Once upon a time—*

ELIZABETH. I am a robber bold !  
See how I snatch thy purse. Open ! Come forth !  
Nay, suffer me. I'll turn it inside out,  
And empty it in my lap. The badge of the Crusades ?  
*(Snatches purse and discovers Crusader's Badge in it.)*



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

What, is my house a Golgotha ? Thou dig'st  
A footing for this cross even in my heart ;  
And then hang'st bleeding on't ! Oh, I shall die !

LUDWIG. I am thunder-struck, and thou art over-  
whelmed.

Passion outstrips my foresight of it.

ELIZABETH. This is Conrad's doing.  
What more is to follow ? Conrad's doing, I say.  
To-night we lie as on a monument,  
Stone merely. Tombs do show  
Their builders' humour to succeeding time,  
A kind of life in death ; here's death in life.  
Thou likeness of things in Heaven,  
This idol-breaker, must he break thee up,  
Because I do enshrine thee ?

LUDWIG. Be more temperate.  
I am to bear the blame.

ELIZABETH. There is no bliss  
But I have bought it with hail-storms of stripes.  
That he should grudge me all !

LUDWIG. Believe me, you suppose  
What he might do, not doeth.

ELIZABETH. Why are you sworn ?

LUDWIG. I am but one of many.

ELIZABETH. How long ago ?

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

LUDWIG. I took the cross in Italy.

ELIZABETH. I humbly pray you pardon my impatience.  
These thrice seven nights and their thrice seven days,  
For tenderness, thou smugglest thine heart-ache,  
Even as a beam in the wall, which, old wives say  
Will smoulder out a month, no spark to hint  
The flame that's to consume us. When is the march?  
Four months hence, as I hear.

LUDWIG. As I hear, so.

ELIZABETH. Now as to ways and means.

LUDWIG. Thou art a brave captain.

ELIZABETH. There must be imposts wrung.

LUDWIG. Sooner we'll ride like Templars  
Two on a horse, and save our provender ;  
Nor set Thuringian arteries abroad  
To feed campaigning. I fear one widow's curse  
More than the brunt of Infidels armed to the teeth,  
In Palestine.

ELIZABETH. Thou shalt not go.

LUDWIG. Shalt not ?

ELIZABETH. Thou shalt not go to battle !

LUDWIG. But for mine oath !

Repute would thrust the flax into my hands,  
And in derision clepe me Cœur de Lion.

ELIZABETH. Thou art sworn ; I'll with thee ;

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

As hunting oft times ; fen, fall, ford and fell,  
I've footed them, thou knowest, even when thy seed  
Quickened within me heavily. I will run  
Beside of thine embossed charger,  
Busked in the likeness of a dapper page,  
As the Childe Walter's lady-love.

LUDWIG. View me away.  
For thy good peace, Heinrich shall stay behind.  
These solitary men, it often proves,  
Are kind at heart ; oh, rest  
In the protection of my brother Heinrich,  
While I am warring in the Holy Land ;  
No more may be. Would we could double  
Our little months, by waking day and night.

ELIZABETH. Would we were children still. 'Tis easier  
for a woman  
To keep a secret, or to leave unknown  
A secret kept from her, than to deny  
Her husband.

LUDWIG. Oh, thy vows gall worse than mine.

ELIZABETH. I love thee, and I love thee, and I love  
thee.

LUDWIG. Chaste with the chastity of chastity.  
I worship thee.

ELIZABETH. Spare me !

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

LUDWIG.                I must.

Blessed art thou among women ; being so good,  
Thou murderest baseness. We shall, as it were,  
Nightly to bed with an unsheathed sword  
Between our wedded loins—— Oh ! double faith,  
Oath contradicting oath ! How constant, how ?

ELIZABETH.    Ye daily and hourly charities of home,  
Tempt me not past my strength.

LUDWIG.                We will put each other away.

ELIZABETH.    We have done so.

LUDWIG.                Too truly. Yet,  
Rather than such a severance, I would be  
In fever's cautery made tinder. Spousals, farewell ;  
We do your balms resign.

ELIZABETH.                A Crusader's wife,  
And a Crusader's widow !

*(Exeunt.)*

SCENE III.—THE SAME.

(*Enter ISENTRUDE and GUTA.*)

ISENTRUDE. Great Rudolph and Walter, Erlstetten, Erba and the rest are abroad ; and Ludwig commanding this half of Germany. Conrad, also, goes up and down, harrowing all souls.

GUTA. He doth. And you so brief time away with the holy army, bring back our noble lady near dead.

ISENTRUDE. Arrived at Schmalcald, on the road, our prince kissed his mother as a son ; scarce spoke parting for grief at heart. And the most of us turned back.

GUTA. Was there not much sorrow ?

ISENTRUDE. Mother holding son, and wife husband. All wept alike in tumult, grown man and growing youth. Saxon and Thuringener, all in Ludwig's command, Swabian, Franconian and Rhinelander, vied together in friendly struggle. Ludwig, as if in fetters bound—some hung on his arm, some on his neck, on his garments—could not speak ; and kisses sought were dashed

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

aside. Oh, there was multitudinous confusion of dear faces.

GUTA. And our sweet mistress, parted she among all this?

ISENTRUDE. At last he mounted with his knights, song and sobbing heard side by side, and chanting. Yet close by, that most faithful lady followed after her true spouse. For when she would return, the force of love and pain drew her a day's journey on ; and yet that not enough.

GUTA. And thou wentest forth also ?

ISENTRUDE. Another full day's journey done, Rudolph the Cup-bearer urged over-masteringly that she should back, which had to be.

GUTA. They fell on one another's neck ?

ISENTRUDE. He commending her to the brotherhood of his brother. So I, in this end of June, bring her home.

*(Exeunt.)*

SCENE IV.—THE SAME.

*(Enter WOLFRAM and other LORDS.)*

WOLFRAM. Abroad, a niggard fist, lest the brother's wife sow broadcast with the whole sack ; a close hand in hall, lest we laugh too much, and grow pursy. I will anatomize Raspon to you. He lights the candle at neither end ; he hath not in him to be good host, even when drunk ; silent when sober, he grows heavy ere he grow merry. But, without weeping, we have Cap-and-bells and our own gaiety as cataplasms.

*(Enter HEINRICH.)*

HEINRICH. Attend ye the dowager ?

WOLFRAM. We attend the noble lady. Command you aught, my lord ?

HEINRICH. No, I keep apart.

WOLFRAM. I am excogitating a most quaint habit of attire, something most comely. There was a young blade once bade his tailor make him a doublet, for extreme fancy, cut with one sleeve longer than the other.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

HEINRICH. Thou forcest a barren soil ; a jest out of season lacks for savour.

WOLFRAM. Yet thou shalt hear me, for thy sins. When that same doublet was brought home, quoth our gallant, "Thou knave tailor, look at these odd sleeves!"—My Lords, an ye yawn in my face, ye shall find no mercy.—"Odd sleeves," cried the snipper, measuring-rod in hand, like the angel of the Apocalypse or I wot not where, "Thou desiredst one sleeve longer than its fellow." "Ay, ay," cried our Fantastic ; "but thou hast cut the one sleeve shorter than its fellow!" So would I be clothed.

HEINRICH. Wilt thou not fly a flight of wit with the fool ?

WOLFRAM. Nay, two of a trade cannot thrive by one another ; besides, he vows to break up none but a fairer capon than I am.

HEINRICH. Ye have leave.

*(Exeunt WOLFRAM and LORDS.)*

As for Thekla, still lose I time with her ; too much in all. Would I had made away with her in the woods. Lust burns the night more wastefully than the student's oil. Let it pass ; she is but a fly on the wheel.

*(Enter THEKLA.)*

When, lap-dog, spaniel ?



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

THEKLA. I am sick and giddy. Thou hast a lock of my hair thou spinn'st, and wilt weave my shroud o't. Heigho ! One foot in the grave ; so I will not buy me a pair of new shoes.

HEINRICH. Thou hast my ring of me. Thy hour is after daylight.

THEKLA. I am the Man in the Moon for picking up sticks on a Sunday. Though I be caught up to Heaven by the four corners, I shall be a castaway.

HEINRICH. Moan elsewhere.

THEKLA. 'Tis rotten fruit hangs on the gallows-tree, but will not down for shaking. No ? quoth the corby. Now to play Peep-bo !

HEINRICH. Away, horse-fly !

THEKLA. To Conrad, the hell-cook ?

(*Enter SOPHIA, COUNTESS VON SAYM, WOLFRAM, LORDS and other ATTENDANTS.*)

SOPHIA. Why withdrawest thou in gloom, to make me keep court rather than thou ?

HEINRICH. This foul snowy weather clogs the blood. Thou lookest mournfully ; take not me to task.

SOPHIA. I have news from Italy ; the worst that can be. Where is my daughter-in-law ? As I think, she hath laid her chicks asleep, and shall walk here anon.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

THEKLA. Aye, but she is a good mistress will never see a poor wretch damned here and hereafter. Now who will twist the willow shall throttle me? Well-away, well-away!

HEINRICH. This foolishness should keep with her.

THEKLA. To lie awake all night i' the grave! Let her sleep; she hath weaned her boy.

HEINRICH. Speak of her, see her; as a word spoken brings down snow in the high Alps. How she strides it, in her husband's boots. Why must I couch, while Ludwig is blazoned rampant?

*(Enter ELIZABETH, with HERMANN and GUTA.)*

ELIZABETH. Little Hermann,  
My last born, first born son. What awful joy  
That a man is born into the world alive!  
Compassed in weakness, so much possible,  
Within such little frame, so small a gnat,  
To such a stature promised, full of thoughts  
To grow as large as heaven; even in this piece  
Of dimpled earth, a some-day saint. Say you,  
Hath he not my Ludwig's face well copied?

SOPHIA. Thou hast limned the features very like.

ELIZABETH. So write to Ludwig. Me he knows for a favourable and unjust judge. Oh, wordless infancy,

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

how it makes love to us ! Would to God my Ludwig might watch these blossoms with me. Rock him, nurse. Thekla, sit thee quiet among my maidens. 'Tis best.

THEKLA. The kindly fruits of the earth ! Come, boy-bishop ; gentle lady-confessor, woe is me !

*(Exit, and GUTA with HERMANN.)*

ELIZABETH. She hath a soul, as any of us.

SOPHIA. Put by the poor wretch and her care, a moment.

ELIZABETH. Let me to her.

SOPHIA. Afterwards, daughter. Daughter, I think thou hast a very able courage ;  
Yet fear thou art a painted soldier,  
And hast no more resistance than the panel  
Whereon are weaklings pictured.

ELIZABETH. Is there new need of courage ?

SOPHIA. Always in war.

COUNTESS VON SAYM. What by Providence  
Befallest him thou dravest out to the wars  
To escape thy strictures——

ELIZABETH. God forbid it ! But is my brother captive ?  
By ransom and God's help, he must be freed.

SOPHIA. He is dead.

ELIZABETH. No, never, no !  
The clouds have hidden him.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

SOPHIA. Off Otranto in Calabria, dead;  
Where a most blighting fever parched him up.

ELIZABETH. The world is dead; nor is not sweet  
No more than carrion now.

SOPHIA. Oh, kneel not so.  
And with thy hands clasp not thy knees in vain.

ELIZABETH. Ye angels, deal gently with him in  
Purgatory!  
I can still pray for him.

SOPHIA. Thou canst do no more.

ELIZABETH. I can pray for him.  
Not yet awhile. Thou infirm, rocking floor,  
Tumble about like ocean, pitch and toss,  
Roll to and fro! The walls and roof fall inward!  
Up and be doing.

(Exit.)

SOPHIA. Her brain's unhinged. Now Thuringen  
shall go  
In swaddling-clothes, with lady-mother mad!

COUNTESS VON SAYM. Prince Hermann, lightly, can  
be overlooked.

SOPHIA. Good counsellor! At once I tax thy sloth,  
Heinrich,  
And wound thy sullen envy to the quick.  
Why *swaddling-clothes*, with noble Heinrich by?

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

HEINRICH. Before, she impoverished us with lazarett-houses.

SOPHIA. Stir up thy vassals, counts are at thy back.  
Up, steal not like a thief ; lay hold. Thou art  
Of princely quality. In all of worth  
Ludwig surpassed thee, yet thou art Ludwig's heir.

HEINRICH. Hitherto a bow unstrung, bend me, good  
mother,  
And I shoot poisoned arrows.

SOPHIA. Rally thy strength,  
Both in thy body and body politic.  
Shame shake thee out of ease ! For Elizabeth,  
Take hostages, her children and herself ;  
And let none see them lest they pity them.

HEINRICH. Let me alone in it. I am alight.  
Ye women speak of pity, and in a trice  
Feel pity. I have none. The nearest way  
Is shortest. Women for a crooked stick  
Go through the wood and through the wood.  
(*Enter ISENTRUDE and FOOL.*)

SOPHIA. See, storms of tears.

WOLFRAM. A witch out on a rainy day.

ISENTRUDE. How Elizabeth left you, ye do know.  
Oh, anon she coursed through the whole length of the  
palace ; and, quite beside herself, had run to the edge of

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

the world, but that a wall stayed her—where we found her ; and, generally understanding her distress, led her away, whence she clung like to storm-rooted ivy.

FOOL. My poor sister with her, is more sane and sound than she.

SOPHIA. Plainly she is not mistress of her acts.

ISENTRUDE. 'Tis thrice five years—nay, twenty years ago,

We in one cradle, a mock bridal bed  
Betokening wedlock when they ripened, couched  
Two babes, two crowing babes. Oh ! tiny hands  
Met tiny hands, and little arms entwined,  
With such a pretty noise : we read it fair ;  
As they who read nativities do read  
Happiness in the stars above.

SOPHIA. Fond woman, leave thy toys !

ISENTRUDE. No news is good news, here is a budget.  
Speak of next-year and the devil laughs.

*(Exit.)*

SOPHIA. A grandam's tale, eked out with musty saws.

HEINRICH. I have not read the letter yet at full ;  
Speak of my brother's deathbed. Chiefly, is it  
Beyond dispute ?

SOPHIA. The Patriarch of Jerusalem  
Aneled him ; and in that prelate's arms,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Rocked on the Adriatic in his pinnace,  
My letters say, he yielded up the ghost.

HEINRICH. This, signed and sealed by all these  
weighty hands.

SOPHIA. Now comes his widow. Oh, her weeds  
of woe  
Since he did part, leave naught for deeper now.  
Her handmaids lead her. Play the man aright.  
Be stern as Conrad of Marpurg; gall be thy manhood;  
Covetousness make courage in thy spleen,  
Else thou art a drone. But put thy house in order,  
That thou mayest with the better face  
Meet the Crusaders.

HEINRICH. When they return.

SOPHIA. Good, but I fear me thou hast but black  
bile.  
Thou'st ever proved a promise in the Spring;  
But a bad harvest when the Autumn comes;  
That no dependence can be put on thee.

HEINRICH. Trust me, and leave me.

SOPHIA. Saym, Erbe and Erlstetten should be thine.

HEINRICH. Mother, I am resolved what to do.  
What once I take in hand I carry through.

SOPHIA (*To WOLFRAM and ATTENDANTS*). Attend the  
presence, if I forsake it.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

HEINRICH. Thou, fool, thou'dst best to murder  
me,

And put me from correcting of thy faults  
For good and ever ; thou'dst best strike me dead,  
Ere disobey me while I am alive.

FOOL. Who durst murder a Margrave ?

HEINRICH. Then, Clown,  
Divine your part ; ask not your function ;  
Your mistress lodges here never again.  
At your life's peril, make this understood.

FOOL. I am dull of wit here.

HEINRICH. Learn insolence ;  
Sharpen thy wit ; prove it on Hungary's child,  
By pushing her outside of these four walls ;  
Or else be hanged, sirrah !

*(Re-enter ELIZABETH, led by ISENTRUDE and GUTA with  
THEKLA.)*

ELIZABETH. Dead in Calabria !

FOOL. The Landgrave, madam——

ELIZABETH. He is no more.

ISENTRUDE. He means Prince Hermann, lady.

FOOL. Madam, the Landgrave Heinrich——

GUTA. Landgrave dolt !

FOOL. Wants room in the castle.

GUTA. Hath turned thee out of service ?



THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

FOOL. Needs must when the devil drives ; or else 'a takes

The house-end with him. Needs must my lady go.

The Landgrave's word is that my lady go.

There is no help but that my lady go.

ELIZABETH. Go ?

FOOL. Court not worse luck. Guta, persuade her go.

Thekla, an thou canst, persuade thy mistress go.

Go !

ELIZABETH. Thou art a saucy fellow, and dost forge

This message of thyself. Heinrich, I pray thee,

Since I forbear him, punish not this man

I nursed through the Black Death.

FOOL. Fall not out with me.

I had much leifer it were your Ladyship sent

The Lord Heinrich packing.

HEINRICH. If any burgess,

Nay, one who lives by bread, do harbour her,

With fire, food, water, to her minister,

He is a traitor. Count Wolfram, have it proclaimed.

ELIZABETH. I am bewildered. Hath grief bodily power

To make our life a hurling phantasma

Fooling both ear and eye, our senses liars

Of what goes on about us ? This is palpable,

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Nor no delusion dangerous ; unless  
Thou are in such veiling o' the mind ; if so,  
Prince, I appeal from Heinrich mad, to Heinrich  
In his right thoughts.

HEINRICH. I am fierce, but not deranged  
In faculties. Lodge on the moors, for me,  
Black skies thy blanket. Off !

ELIZABETH. Mother !

SOPHIA. No mother of thine.

Heinrich is my child.

*(Exit with COUNTESS VON SAYM.)*

ELIZABETH. God forgive you both !  
Where are my lord's kinsfolk ?

HEINRICH. I am one of them.

ELIZABETH. Where is Conrad of Marpurg ?

HEINRICH. Burning heretics ;  
Sooner careful of the fuel he wastes,  
Than how many bodies consumed.

ELIZABETH. Let me be angry  
And sin not.

HEINRICH. Be that as you choose. About !

ELIZABETH. Whither, under the sun and moon ?

HEINRICH. There's thoroughfare ;  
The roads are open.

ELIZABETH. Steady me, nurse.

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

WOLFRAM (*Aside*).                      Of this abuse  
I will write letters to the Bishop of Bamberg,  
And to the Abbess of Kitzingeners,  
Her aunt and uncle, and to Varila's countess.  
Elizabeth I scorn, him scorn and hate.

ELIZABETH. I know thee now, the fountain-head.  
Be kind  
Unto the children ; they are of thy blood.  
The very wolf is faithful to his pack.

HEINRICH. Thou shalt be burdened with them still.  
Some way  
The three shall follow thee.

ELIZABETH.                      Better  
In God's hands than in man's. Grant tarrying  
To kiss my pigeons and to take them. Short shrift ?  
Hands off !

(HEINRICH *hustles* ELIZABETH.)  
At midnight, Isentrude,  
Fetch, to the Matins of the Minorities,  
Our priceless merchandise  
And burden of my marriage, under thy wing ;  
I shall be there. No, girls,  
Go back and say Elizabeth hath built  
Eternal citadels in poor men's hearts ;  
A people's love shall do us right. Nor force,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Power nor persuasion sunders me alive  
From lips that browsed even here, kind Isentrude.  
To the road !

THEKLA. Kiss and be friends (*taking them both by the hand*).

HEINRICH. Decamp, I say. Now is a lull of air.  
Blow in thy fingers when the winds arise,  
When thou art goose-skinned in the nipping east  
That blows from Moscow.

ELIZABETH. O Lord God of Hosts,  
If that thou lov'st the fatherless and widow,  
Almighty Father, all Thy winds at once,  
Rattle Thy four winds in the welkin, till  
The dome of Heaven is a cathedral bell,  
To scare the jubilant devils, and to toll  
My momentary knell. No signs and wonders,  
No sound ? A naughty generation  
Seeketh a sign and erreth. Open, doors !  
Hollow and universal roof of space,  
Empiered upon this paddock, this rough glebe,  
This peasant earth, span and great arch of sky  
That to the key-stone soars,  
Oh, shelter me ; and thou Ancient of Days  
Whose foot-stool is our gusty firmament  
And the luminous heavens, drape thick fog

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Lest that the palmed saints behold and curse  
My wronger, breaking to unhallowed wrath,  
And dabble in malignity. Stop, stop !  
I will not call down fire on thee ; never fear  
I'll imprecate it ; I will to my knees  
And pray to be absolved from this rage.  
Yet I have no rage at all, but only  
Peerless grief, peerless grief.  
Open the postern, ope ! it is white world.  
I never knew how hatefully snow shone,  
Till I had no door to shut it out.

*(Exit.)*

HEINRICH. Bolt her out in the snow.  
Send her children after her. I will not rear them.  
See she's proclaimed at the market-cross.

*(Exeunt HEINRICH, WOLFRAM and ATTENDANTS.)*

ISENTRUDE. After, at speed.  
Promise faithfully her children come. Speed, Guta.  
GUTA. Aye, to the world's end.

*(Exit.)*

FOOL. An ill wind, and blows nobody good.

*(Exit with THEKLA.)*

ISENTRUDE. Shameful, shameless monster, rear them ?  
Not thou !  
Be mine to lift them gently from the cot,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Ere earliest dawn to seek her. Turned away  
To beggary ? Men sang another song  
When she came rolling in riches thither ! Lady,  
An 'twere thy will, the time should come about  
To set thy heel upon thy enemy's throat !  
But thou'lt bind up their wounds for them. Widowed  
At twenty, who was a seventeen-year-old bride !

*(Exit.)*

SCENE V.—EISENACH. BEFORE THE GATE OF THE  
MINORIES.

(*Enter ELIZABETH and GUTA.*)

ELIZABETH. My prattlers, prattlers! Shield them,  
thou gulfy night

That hold'st this town. Thanks that thou cam'st to me,  
Guta. Oh,

Among a thousand have I not found one.  
What a world is this. Foxes and birds of the air—  
Had I not where to lay my head, I were  
But as the Son of Man. Here is a pillow  
Not easily worn out, to wit, a stone.

GUTA. This is the Friary.  
How fast 'tis freezing, so that the ground sings!  
I'll call. *Ho, fathers, help, we perish!*  
*Fathers, for hope of grace!*  
They are astir on the stair. *Good fathers, open!*  
*Holy fathers!*

(*Enter, above, SUPERIOR and BRETHREN.*)

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

ELIZABETH.                      Ye are not as other men,  
Scribes and Pharisees ! My yearling boy,  
My boy and girls, ye know they're adorable,  
And how I adore them all,—

GUTA. Father, my lady's plight—they point their  
fingers  
Churchward, as who would have us take sanctuary.  
Church is no sanctuary from the frost.

SUPERIOR. Daughters, we know you not, knowing  
you well.  
The Apostle binds us to submit ourselves  
Unto the powers that be, who have forbidden,  
And cried it with a proclamation,  
All hearths, all roofs to yield you bed or board.

*(Exeunt all above.)*

ELIZABETH. These men are fat with crumbs dropped  
from my table.  
Gratitude, thou art fugitive with dogs,  
Since men have cast thee out. Why stay, my children ?  
Vows of poverty and obedience ? A fine lesson !  
Poverty-stricken ? Had I but a crust,  
I'd tithe, and give nine parts. Hermann is the heir—  
Comes to his own, truly. Why tarry, my children ?  
The matins, hark ! Poor men make fast the pin,  
And through elflocks scowl over empty looms ;



THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Yea, chide the very dogs that pity me.

They are no worse than their betters. Oh, mine  
eyes

Feed on the track home. Harm is done my babes !

GUTA. Oh, think it not. The dowager is a woman.  
Come into the Church for warmth.

ELIZABETH. Witness against these doors, witness,  
till we

Stiffen to corpses in the soundless rime,  
And let the thaw discover us.

GUTA. Alack !

ELIZABETH. Would ye were  
The kind black friars ! Last night, time after time,  
As I did lie in visionary sleep,  
Methought from out the heaving pasturage,  
My mother disengaged and freed her limbs ;  
A fiery dart impaled her, and forked tongues  
Of nether flame oozed up. No woman ever  
Did the sin branded on her, yet she sinned  
Wildly. That our first parents fell !

GUTA. Isentrude brings thy flock.

ELIZABETH. I saw them ere you spake.  
Alas, I pity every babe that breathes ;  
And chide at heart with all who bring babes forth ;  
Experience condemns mothers ; they provoke

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Their children unto wrath ; I prophesy  
Against them.

GUTA.                                 Down the steep  
She shepherds thy young lambs.   The moon, though sick,  
Baffled toward dawn, and humbled in her sphere,  
Betrays them ghostly.

ELIZABETH.                         I saw a cripple once ;  
He had good cause to hate the blessed sun,  
Yea, curse his mother and the use of kind  
That so mismade him.   Now the time  
Is crippled.   Guta, I am numb as the North ;  
Lap thyself warm.   Where shall I take my brood ?  
Heaven is to look on them !   This grief is light  
And floats a-top.

GUTA.                                 In faith, good mistress——

ELIZABETH.                         If I spell *widow*,  
Or write it in the snow, it looketh less  
Than infinite despair.

GUTA.                                 Go not to bed in the snow.

ELIZABETH.   The earth is leprous.

(*Enter WOLFRAM.*)

I bear thee no malice.

WOLFRAM.   Nor I thee.

GUTA.   Wolfram von Saym, startest thou out of the air ?

WOLFRAM.         I' the rheumy bed-time, I have beaten

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

The bounds, almost, to-night. Elizabeth,  
I, with great ado, find thee, to heap up coals  
Of fire on thy high head. Thou hast gone begging  
Throughout the town, and pouched evil for good.  
For Ludwig's sake, who was a luscious prince,—  
Nay, never catch thy breath to hear him named—  
And for thine own, good shrew, come to my lodging  
Where we will make good cheer this Lapland Yule.  
My wife will cherish, worship and welcome thee.  
Here is good for evil.

ELIZABETH.                      Thou hast not heard.  
But know that all must bar me out of doors,  
Under a dreadful penalty.

WOLFRAM.                      I know it ; and defy it.  
Lo ! to-night's scathing air sets the wolves howling  
Under the very walls, starved from their lairs ;  
Here we woo frost-kibes ; act first, question last ;  
It darkens whilst I speak, and darkens yet.  
Dare Heinrich chop the bough he bestrides—his knights,  
His knights—off from the trunk ? Therefore, come in.  
He cannot on my humour vent his wrath,  
In such a queasy state as he is. Wilt walk ?  
Madam, this night is not for compliment.

ELIZABETH. I am at my wit's end. This my poor  
maiden,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Shut her not out in the cold.

WOLFRAM.                      Good wench, come in.

ELIZABETH.   My little ones, sir, follow.

WOLFRAM.                      My broth cools for no urchins.

ELIZABETH.   Then will I not taste.

GUTA.   Sir, drink it reeking.

WOLFRAM.                      Tut, tut, tut !

I'll stable them, fear nothing they shall starve.

ELIZABETH.   House and home ! Beggars cannot be  
choosers.

WOLFRAM.                      Bring your chucks.

ELIZABETH.   Oh, for my children's sake I embrace  
your bounty.

Good, bring my children after me.

GUTA.                      I will pilot

The true nurse, and with all her charge haste after.

WOLFRAM.   Treasure thou'st squandered on the  
graceless poor

Had kept a sound roof overhead to-day.

ELIZABETH (*To GUTA*).   Shout to them ; I have no  
voice.   Anon,

Bring up the rearward.   We may prove this ark

Frore as near brotherhood.   I learn mistrust.

God's will on earth be done.   I will make trial.

(*Exit with WOLFRAM.*)

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

GUTA. *Sola*, dame Isentrude ! *Sola* !

I was in tears once for a cut finger ; now  
I cannot weep if I would, my tears are frozen ;  
But not with cold, 'tis not the winter weather.  
Saintly, indeed ! Do I not know, she chidden  
For carrying fine bread to the starving, loaves  
Blossomed to roses. Do all men forget ?

(*Enter ISENTRUDE and the PRIEST, with the  
CHILDREN.*)

ISENTRUDE. At good adventure found. Where is  
our mistress ?

Oh, this good, holy priest, one in a cityful,  
Dares to be kind. Where is our mistress ?

GUTA. Yonder.

All last live-long night we went up and down,  
To and fro, across and across again,  
Barred from the very almshouses she built.  
To near a doorway where a fire did blaze,  
Was but to see it, like a miser's heart,  
Shut in our face. The poor, half feared, half triumphing,  
To see their princess so discomfited,  
Talked of privy-conspiracy and sedition.

PRIEST. Oh, as we passed, like hissing did we hear,  
Carters, whose ignorance did mix the terms,  
Mangled law Latin at us.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

GUTA.                      So was it. At last a tavern,  
So horribly obscure it had no fear  
Of consequence, nor terror of the law,  
Where sturdy rogues swore with companions,  
Gulped stinking ale, and hiccoughed in their cups,  
Was kind for thalers : none else man enough,  
No pensioner of them all. The friars here  
Dare yield us but bare sufferance of the church,  
To lie on flag-stones.

ISENTRUDE.              What jewels have you between you ?  
For whiles we live by bread, money hath price.

GUTA. When did she wear the worth of one day's  
meal ?

ISENTRUDE.              Well, if must be,  
Pull, Guta, off from this time-withered hand  
My wedding ring ; the man who set it there  
Should be where he knows my heart.

GUTA.                      Dame Isentrude, there is comfort ;  
Wolfram, her once-reviler, is now her host,  
After some sort at least. There we shall join her.

ISENTRUDE. Not Wolfram von Saym ?

GUTA.                      Von Saym it is.

PRIEST.                      Daughter, if I am a weather prophet,  
Ye shall not force a march with your young charge ;  
But I alone will go, a night-march more

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Fitting my sex, unto Count Wolfram's house.  
The snow bonnets us soon. Hide in the church.

*(Exeunt ISENTRUDE and GUTA, with the CHILDREN.)*

The dawn is broke some hours, but yet the sky  
Is like a wagon-head vault in a crypt.  
Who's here, i' the dark?

*(Enter GRETHEL.)*

GRETHEL. Now cometh the old woman plucking her  
goose, and sending the feathers to market.

PRIEST. What mak'st abroad, daughter?

GRETHEL. Fifty years syne the like. A-field, they  
say, it lyeth seven cloth yards, no drift. Needs carry  
feed to the penfolds. Neighbour hath thirty head  
foundered fathom down. The holly was red last fall.

PRIEST. A green Yule, and a fat kirk-yard. Hast  
owl's eyes? Can'st guide me over stepping-stones,  
daughter?

GRETHEL. One foots them even now.

PRIEST. Good sooth, the Landgravine! Wherefore  
racing back? Give her thy hand, i' mercy.

GRETHEL. Is't? She combed my elflocks once;  
washed my feet. I took the palsy on't. I can dip a  
sheep as cleanly.

*(Exit.)*

PRIEST. The fall begins about us. Reel, ye flakes;

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Reel ! Is there snow left in the heavens yet ?  
Our parish church is buried to the bells.  
Yon causeway, lo, where the sparse stepping-stones  
Do dot the flood—a tussle for it !  
Foul night-hag witch, the Landgravine she thrusts  
Full length in the slough, and rolls her there.  
Whence as the tender lady pulls her limbs  
Which are so stiffly gulfed in the mire,  
The kelpie marl doth whine to loose his prey,  
While his mouth waters. Plastered in mud, she escapes,  
Dripping wet ; soaked, soaked.

*(Re-enter ELIZABETH, all miry.)*

ELIZABETH.

Oh, indignity !

Am I not a king's daughter !

PRIEST.

Verily thou art,

And a most noble one.

ELIZABETH.

My offspring, also,

Honourably born, tenderly nurtured ?

PRIEST.

Out of question.

ELIZABETH. A quagmire, not a house ! Why, I will  
lodge,

Though it reek drunken drunkenness,  
In that foul kennel, again in that foul tavern  
That roofed us yesternight ; that is a palace  
Of hospitable kindness, where we pay,



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

And buy us reverence. Now I begin  
To understand the ingratitude of the poor  
Who gird at hospitals and bite the hands  
That feed them. I am all at one with lazars.

PRIEST. Thou must dry or take cold.

ELIZABETH. That is soon answered.

A quagmire? I name Count Wolfram's house  
A quagmire : and his table but a trough.  
Shame on't. Husks such as the swine do eat  
Were less humiliation—I sought  
Humiliation, knowing not its taste.  
The wood-yard was the corner of their house  
They had prepared to be my children's bed.  
Oh, had they wiped their feet upon my hair,  
They had not worse disdained us ; bud and leaf,  
Because they are mine, are tainted, cankered—

PRIEST. I met a post  
Riding for Bamberg ere the road was whelmed,  
His livery Wolfram's, gone on your behoof ;  
So the man hailed me.

ELIZABETH. But his wife is a scold.  
What women are to women ! Oaks, not reeds,  
Are broken ; have I stood against the storm ?  
Pause, I was ever hasty, these good people  
Have sent to Bamberg ?



THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Upon my stumbling and deathly walk  
Hovering, Manna being out of date, they starve,  
Shrivel, and blow in whirlwinds. What is here ?

PRIEST. What hast thou ? Only a dead bird. She  
grows  
Light i' the head.

ELIZABETH. Never a one he piped to fed him.  
I fear I have lost the road.

PRIEST. Sweet children's treble, call to her  
shrill !

Lift up your voices ; you she hears, or nothing.  
Her hands drop, her head droops.

ELIZABETH. All is one  
An hundred years hence. Would I had the love  
That once I threw away.

PRIEST. Her blood freezes.  
Up, walk a little. I, perforce, enforce thee.  
She is asleep—and to sleep here is death.

(*Re-enter* ISENTRUDE.)

ISENTRUDE. Alack ! she is clad in icicles.

PRIEST. A helping hand.  
Life is within, to suffer more.

(*Exeunt, bearing* ELIZABETH.)

## ACT IV

### SCENE I.—BAMBERG. A ROOM IN THE BISHOP'S PALACE.

*(Enter the BISHOP OF BAMBERG and COUNTESS  
VON VARILA.)*

COUNTESS. My Lord of Bamberg, thy unworldly niece I have this day fetched from Eisenach here, sledding the frozen snow, along with her son and daughters, now left in the keeping of the Mother Abbess.

BISHOP. Well done ! When the county's man told of Heinrich's doings—excommunication, excommunication !—my blood boiled again. Bell, book, and candle ! I will dash Heinrich's brains out !

COUNTESS. A poor priest, in her extremity, did house her, at his proper peril !

BISHOP. As I am a Bishop, a man ! He shall thrive for it. She and her maidens shall wait at Botenstein our providing of good husbands. For Saint Paul

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

teacheth us concerning young widows lest Satan tempt them.

COUNTESS. She cries at such a word, *I will carve my face beyond humanity's form, ere take a second husband.*

BISHOP. Humph! Our Kaiser mourns his wife deceased, Isolt of Jerusalem. In good time, widow with widower may consort. The Landgrave's bones, exhumed at Otranto—the caldron hath seethed them clean—come to lie in our chancel. Upon Good Friday they shall be here.

COUNTESS. And, upon that day of their rest here, the dear Elizabeth vows to tie the hemp of Saint Francis about her. My lord and father, the grey friars are bidden be in readiness; Father Gerard, their Provincial, comes.

BISHOP. That stints not this world's dues. This new Third Order, of either sex, marry and are given in marriage, bound by liberal vows. Under a great oath, Thuringen's nobles and men-at-arms bear in company all remains of their lord, buried awhile till their return. There will be lusty work done. I have bespoke new harness.

COUNTESS. Somewhat refreshed, she will converse with thee.

BISHOP. I will ordain welcome. Conrad the Dominican, whose name is a present terror, leaves his

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

burnings, and is in Bamberg, as I hear. Oh, these zealot friars confound us Churchmen, would amputate our riches, and let us bleed to death !

COUNTESS. I, on news of her wrongs, hastened to her,  
from my castle.

BISHOP. Welcome to you both.

(*Exit* COUNTESS.)

Admit there, ho !

(*Enter* ARMOURER *with mail shirt.*)

That coat of mail, every ring is proof ?

ARMOURER. My lord, ay !

BISHOP. Bring't along. Heinrich is a fool ; but for his outrage, the host returned only to acclaim him chieftain.

(*Exit.*)

ARMOURER. Should this be lamb's wool shorn in the eternal city ? Go to, 'tis a cope, no pallium ; this shall keep the rain off i' dirty weather. Yet 'tis no cope, neither. The Lord Bishop of Bamberg is a little son of Holy Church. Mother Church, look and see whether this be thy very son's coat or no.

(*Exit.*)

SCENE II.—BAMBERG NAVE.

(*Enter* RELIGIOUS, *with the bones of* LUDWIG *carried, and lights ; following them,* ELIZABETH, ABBESS OF THE KITZINGENERS, SOPHIA, HEINRICH, WOLFRAM, COUNTESS VON VARILA, COUNTESS VON SAYM, BISHOP OF BAMBERG, RUDOLPH, WALTER, LEUTOLF, HARTWIG, *other* CRUSADERS, *all armed,* CONRAD, GERARD, FRIARS *black and grey,* TERTIARIES *and* ATTENDANTS.)

RUDOLPH. Carry him shoulder high. March,  
Countrymen !

No din of arms rang over our dear prince,  
Nor vengeance is not left us, only grief.  
How bravely he rode forth, ye know ; he proves  
Still sickness is the deadliest stroke of war ;  
Whom carrying, our love and duty joined,  
We marched, with reversed arms and muffled drum,  
By the home-sick Switzer, under mountains wedged  
Into the sable sky, which for a shroud  
An everlasting winter do put on ;

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

White sepulchres, like nothing Kaisers rear,  
To be our Captain's tomb, who rather sleeps  
Under green German sod, than on their breast.

HEINRICH. A deathless worthy of our Thuringen,  
Ludwig shall cross his legs upon a slab,  
Until the resurrection of the just.

BISHOP. Be busy and effect the same, Sir Prince,  
In due course following. The committal's now.  
After which obsequies, the Landgravine  
Shall sternly in the churchyard hold assize  
As queen of sorrows. In Heinrich's despite,  
Against his part, I name her champions ;  
Rudolph, the Cup-bearer——

RUDOLPH. Here !

BISHOP. Leutolf von Erlstetten——

LEUTOLF. Here !

BISHOP. Hartwig von Erba——

HARTWIG. Here !

BISHOP. Walter von Varila ——

WALTER. I am here !

BISHOP. I have sent couriers to Hungary.  
And Bamberg, for I bloodshed have abjured,  
Will throw a warlike mace into the scale.  
The lady, for sometime to make her moan,  
Shall honourably be brought to Botenstein.



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

CONRAD. She shall to Marpurg, which is in her  
dower,  
If she may by lawful recovery  
Or free-will gift, obtain her hold of it.

BISHOP. Sir Legate,  
Art thou her herald, that thou speak'st for her?  
This fellow would pluck down the stars of heaven!  
Speak, my dear niece.

ELIZABETH. I will to Marpurg, with my daughters  
And little Hermann.

BISHOP (*To ELIZABETH*). Heaven's fool! (*To*

CONRAD) Pedant! Thou learned Goth!

CONRAD. A pedant is  
A man purse-proud in learning; at the best,  
A quarryman of knowledge; I am none,  
But by the way; thou art a prince with princes;  
I am a beggar,  
And beg my daily bread. Thy opulence,  
Through benefactions of the faithful swollen  
With full revenue, proud in outlay spent,  
Reareth cathedral churches. Builders oft,  
Howsobeit episcopal, are lofty  
But as are plumbers on the leads, who mount  
For gust of bread and ale.

BISHOP. Wolf in sheep's clothing,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Who durst deny, and teachest to deny,  
Bullion to church-work, if our Saviour's feet  
Were preciousy anointed ; while the poor  
Abide our leisure——

GERARD.           We have our fanes for ever,  
Sojourning with us like the indigent,  
Till New Jerusalem come.

BISHOP.   Franciscan Gerard, too ?

CONRAD.           To be exonerate,  
Begrime them with no waste.   She shall to Marpurg,  
And learn that holiness lives not in gauds,  
Touches, handles nor tastes.   Here lieth Ludwig,  
Soon to be lapt in lead, in lieu of steel.

RUDOLPH.   O ruthless monster, wilt thou from his  
                 bones  
Strip off the seemly decency of clothes,  
And show them naked to the world and her ?

CONRAD.   Look on the body of thy perished life ;  
He was this clad in clay.

ELIZABETH.           I can stand alone.  
Cherish, cherish his bones, Earth.   Must I echo,  
O Death, where is thy sting ?   His cleansed bones,  
Purged from the fat and marrow of the flesh,  
Lie all an heap.   They should be hid in lilies !  
He looketh at me with his empty pits,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Whiter than ivory, in Bamberg nave,  
Shrined in a lidless ark. All is so strange.  
Seed of corruption, we are too frail.  
Thank Heaven, I cannot raise the dead, or I,  
Being strong in faith, tempted beyond the depth  
Of my submission—Ye are all afraid!—  
Young man, I say unto thee, arise,  
Leaving uncharioteered an orb in Heaven,  
As void as Lucifer's. Oh, I must do it,  
If it were in my power! O, help, O!

CONRAD. Let drop the pall again!

GERARD Life is a torture-chamber.

(*Exit ELIZABETH in a swoon, borne by ABBESS and  
NUNS, CONRAD following.*)

RUDOLPH. Now the flood-gates are open. Only fury  
Can save our eyes from the steel-rusting dew.  
Duke Heinrich, on no worse a plot of ground  
Than the floor of the nave, I challenge thee  
Unto a reckoning. Where is the high look  
On thy disgraceful forehead, where the squared elbows  
That thrust thy sovran sister out of doors?  
Methinks thou learnest lowly humbleness,  
Abasement and all virtues of the meek.  
And thou art brotherly, for thou dost prate  
Of building a crusader's monument

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

And tomb for Ludwig's body. Careful love !  
But I shall tell thee, Heinrich Raspon,  
Enforced repentance hath no currency.  
Thy deed hath whelmed perdition on thy crown  
Beyond thy washing off. Thou'lt roll in fire,  
And with Iscariot search hell to the bed ;  
So good men pray. The which to hasten on,  
I stand accoutred in chastising arms,  
And, peer to prince, give thee defiance large,  
That I with war-experienced hand will soon  
Upon thine anvilled breast, stead up ! Thy coat,  
The voiceless language of thy heraldry,  
Blazons thee of Ludwig's kin ; thou art mis-begotten  
Or changeling from the cradle.  
Therefore shouldst give thy scutcheon, quarterly,  
Loathing and wag-tongue scorn. So I defy thee,  
And hold my peace, until I break thy peace !  
LEUTOLF. Duke Heinrich, thou art blacker than the  
fiend,  
Damned below the bottomless abyss  
And nether lodgement of profoundest hell,  
Even while thy wraith doth haunt us. Thee I defy.  
This iron gage of battle stoop and lift.  
Ludwig was still true to Elizabeth ;  
And in the armour of their chastity

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

I case myself. Thou art a botched liar,  
A vile off-scouring of thy noble race.

WALTER. Duke Heinrich, in short parlance, I defy  
thee,

Thou counterfeit brother, damned brother-in-law,  
Most valiant cock-o'-the-walk behind men's backs !

HARTWIG. Duke Heinrich, I defy thee to the teeth !

BISHOP. Raspon, these gloves, all four of them, ring  
true.

HEINRICH. Blaspheming traitors, take your bans again ;  
And be your curses venom in your lips  
To rat's-bane you yourselves ; choked be your throats ;  
The devil and his angels take you all !

RUDOLPH. Out, sword, and swear as loud !

WALTER. Out, sword !

LEUTOLF. Out, sword !

HARTWIG. Out, sword !

HEINRICH. Put up ; for Raspon moves no civil broil,  
Which is unmannered and the use of fools.

I do refer me to the general voice  
Of all the feudatories. By advice  
Of those fore-gathered with me, did I move ;  
Not tortiously ; but on opinion heard.  
I look around ; if on a show of hands  
I am out-numbered fairly, my retreat

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Shall be the end of my aggressive march.

Comrades, hold up your hands, good friends ! Hell rot you !

HARTWIG. No soul that eats thy bread, but spits it out,  
Being more sickened at thy cowardice  
Than at thy tyrannous, rapacious theft.

GERARD. I blame not wrath. For all things time and place.

Now let these weary and much-travelled bones,  
With quiet, pomp and prayer, interred be.

SOPHIA. Son ! Heinrich ! But thou never comfortest.  
On, my Lord Bishop ! Here Sophia droops.

*(Exeunt, with the bones, all except SOPHIA and COUNTESS  
VON VARILA.)*

I dare not follow to the brink, look down  
Into his open grave, except his wife  
Be by, and plead my pardon. Wiser it were  
To take my grandchildren unto her now,  
Her little ones. My cloudy son  
Appears a promontory, but approached  
Is yielding fog. I laughed—though full of wrath,  
For 'twas against my child—at their big words  
That beat him like a drum. I ought to see  
The last rite done my Ludwig. I loathe Heinrich  
Since with scant words and scanter courtesy

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

He shoved her out of doors, he did foul deed  
So foully.

COUNTESS VON VARILA. Elizabeth cometh up the aisle.

SOPHIA. We will together. The vault is not yet  
closed.

Some motherly hand giveth her her children.

(*Re-enter CONRAD, ELIZABETH led by the ABBESS, with  
ISENTRUDE, GUTA and the three CHILDREN.*)

ELIZABETH. Earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to  
ashes, we are

Vessels of clay ; break us to pieces quickly.

Oh, that the shallow, yet abysmal grave

Keepeth so near us what is far beyond

Our galling tether !

SOPHIA. Step back ; be deaf and blind with tears, all.

ELIZABETH. Thy will be done, Lord ! Brain, brain,  
brain, thou fool !

Oh, I have counted every paving flag

I have over-spanned and measured with my steps ;

Abhorred arithmetic ; one, two three, four—

Trifles are scratched, in mocking levity,

Deep on the receptive mind, during such hours—

Five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten—

Oh, idlest note ! These gilded images

Are ill, their lavish gilding ill bestowed

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

While one monk laid in the infirmary  
Were better for good food. I shall remember  
This altar-piece unto my dying day,  
This tabernacle work ; ceilure, cusp, canopy,  
Finial and hood, crocket and pinnacle  
Become a part of thought.

*(Re-enter, without the bones, HEINRICH, BISHOP OF  
BAMBERG, GERALD, RUDOLPH, WALTER, HARTWIG,  
LEUTOLF, WOLFRAM, COUNTESS VON SAYM, FRIARS  
black and grey, TERTIARIES and ATTENDANTS.)*

HEINRICH. Gentle my brother's widow,  
Sister, I do repent me of my sin ;  
Steadfastly purposing to lead a new  
And better life. Forgive me, in the name  
Of Saint John the Evangelist.

BISHOP. Out upon thee !

RUDOLPH. There is credit in our arms  
That, pledged, doth buy out opposition,  
Ere they be paid. *(To ELIZABETH)* Lord Heinrich on  
his knees,

Thy prisoner of war, Hermann is lord,  
Upheld by all his loyal vassalage  
Who kneeling, in another mood, in mail,  
Do pray thee thou wilt grant us government,  
And in the Wartburg reign as Dowager.



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

SOPHIA. Lo, here I kneel by my repentant son,  
And for myself and him am penitent.

ELIZABETH. All petitioners to me ?

CONRAD. What of that ?  
Lord Count, take Hermann back to Eisenach.

ELIZABETH. Then we'll to Eisenach.

CONRAD. Thou hast forsook the world ;  
No more to thee this principality,  
Its charge and strife, no, nor thine only son  
Thou shalt not nourish, clothe nor teach to speak,  
Than is the stithy soot thou wouldst cleanse off  
And wipe from thy besmirched hand.

ELIZABETH. Art thou soot, Hermann ?  
But how name thee ? Iceberg ? whose wash, for leagues,  
Thou Dominican, as with frigid touch,  
Chills the mid-ocean ? Whatsoever thing thou art,  
Charge me on my obedience to tarry  
A little while ; until my son be grown ;  
But till he walk. Make me a pelican  
In her piety, unto runnels carving  
This breast to still my young.

CONRAD. Thou art not fit  
For the Kingdom of Heaven.

ELIZABETH. Who but the Elect are ?

CONRAD. Worthless stubble !

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

ELIZABETH                      Come back !  
O kneeling army, do ye supplicate?  
I am puffed up with pride. Stand ! What am I ?  
Ye images of the Creator, bowed,  
And humbly crooked, up ! By your fair leave,  
My good lords and true vassals, I will tell you  
About my married life ; we ever feared  
To warp each other from perfection.  
And by the self-same rule, our little son—  
Let him begone ! Hide him, lest mine eyes doat.  
Our brother Heinrich, I create thee  
Regent for life ; my son to bear all honours.  
Crown ye his baby brows. If any ask  
Where fell his mother's last kiss, say it was sealed  
Here, 'twixt his eyes, good Aunt, I pray you. At once  
I will to Marpurg with my daughters ; and  
Will pour a wealth of love upon their heads.  
Two is the lion's share of three.

CONRAD.                      Oh, pause !  
Great Abbess of the nuns of Kitzingen,  
I give into thy most devoted charge  
This one of these two princely maidens. Madam,  
Without farewell unto thy worldly gear,  
With this one balm allowed thy frailty,  
Up and begone.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

ELIZABETH. To Marpurg, ewe-lamb,  
Without thy sister. A guilty mother were  
An accursed heritage. Nestlings, draw near.  
Four little hands, four eyes. Starvation  
With this society were full.

*(Clasps her daughters.)*

CONRAD. How now ?

ELIZABETH. Content !  
A mother's love builds on an only child  
As large as hers with many.

CONRAD. Then I deny thee one.  
Hate all thy darlings ; let thy soul be blank,  
As is futurity.

ELIZABETH. I have done with thee, Conrad :  
Since thou deny'st me all, I do claim all.  
Body and soul, this is a second birth  
Undreamt of, with ten-thousandfold worse pains  
And anguish multiplied and magnified,  
Over the first ; a second birth, I wot,  
My children plucked from off me. Babes, babes, babes,  
Babes—hush ; his babes. The Rachels of old Ramah  
Shrieked even so, thou Herod.

CONRAD. Naughty tongue !  
Home with thee ; buy thee flatterers again !  
Cowards, instead of service in the wars,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Pay mercenary scutage, fees for blood ;  
An alms-deed is religion's scutage ; ruin  
Fortune in infinite gifts ; do good works—  
Thy babes be hence thy gods——

ELIZABETH.                      Take thine eyes off me !  
Fast, penance, watches, prayer, the rod correct  
The Eve in me.    Thou'rt not of Adam's race ;  
He doth deny, disclaim thee, shut thee from  
Redemption, and disown thee from his blood.  
If thou art living, tremble ; tremble and shake  
Until thou crack.    Thou takest on thee, being human,  
To disembowel Nature ; salt and fire  
Thou strewest on her raw.    Prescribe me penance,  
Heartily I beseech thee, from my heart.

CONRAD.    Daughter, I will ; and, heated over  
                 much,  
Sore need the like myself.    Hence, and bestow  
Her offspring, severally.

ELIZABETH.                      Throes of death !

CONRAD.    Take hence.

ELIZABETH.                      Not a foot of them all moves ;  
Yet it will happen, word for word.    Thou dragon  
Prowled from the uninhabitable waste,  
Unto our neighbourhood—Oh, I shall die of grief,  
But not just yet.    No, I have suffered pangs—

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

I will not speak of them—and suffered shame  
To blushing though I was alone before  
My honest conscience. Fell scavenger,  
What hadst thou to infect our homely joys  
With plague spots, to blow upon purity  
And make it nameless, the familiar bed  
Pollution of the tomb? Inquisitive  
Scruples, insinuations pestilent,  
Thou didst suggest them all; such near respects  
As poison modesty! No more, no more;  
We have all our histories! But now,  
*Take hence*, ye heard him, all of ye. *Take hence*:  
No mortal lips but thine durst speak it. *Hence*?  
I would thou wert a she-bear and hadst cubs  
To growl about. But thou art one in a thousand,  
And hast no liver; thou'dst not feel damnation  
Nor yet salvation. Tomb-land marl! O clod!  
Worse than the rack and wheel, engine of pain!  
Dire apparition! I recollect,  
I am not to lie soft. My saplings  
Must not to Marpurg with me. Nurse my maids,  
Good mine Aunt; my nobles, rally round my son.

COUNTS. A Hermann! A Hermann!

COUNTESS VON VARILA. Suffer me as a disciple.  
(*Excunt, severally, the ABBESS and her RELIGIOUS with*

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

*the* DAUGHTERS ; *and the* COUNTESS VON VARILA *with*  
HERMANN.)

ELIZABETH.                   The billows close overhead,  
Humming me asleep. Farewell, dear little faces.  
I rise three times, and am immortal.

GERARD.                   'Tis no new thing, to-day,  
She enters the Third Order of Franciscans—  
Grant her the grace of fiery Pentecost !—  
Yon chapel waits for her investiture.

CONRAD. Let it go forward !

GERARD (*To* ELIZABETH). Lay thou hold upon the  
altar  
That, for Good Friday, baldly stands undraped,  
In imitation of our Lord who hung  
Bare on the tree.

ELIZABETH.                   Close the lenten veil  
Behind me ; for, the like disfurniture  
To imitate, this body I must denude,  
As the Magdalen, amid unpeopled sands  
And clattered boulders. Trappings vain, adieu !  
Isentrude, Guta, mother, and sisterly friends,  
Stand sentinel before the screen ! Mount guard ;  
Keep watch, as shepherds over their flocks i' the field,  
On the night of the first Christmas Eve. Unclasp,  
Thou buckle.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

CONRAD.                    Say on.

ELIZABETH.                I do renounce my will,  
My parents, and my children now to be  
As of another's race ; all ties of blood  
Dissolve in kindless charity,  
Along with pomps and vanities together  
Of this world. To begin, for ever and aye,  
All my possessions I here strip off.

CONRAD.                    Stay, there !  
Thy just possessions thou shalt not strip off.  
Penniless fasting is necessity.  
Abstemious mid plenty, that it is  
Which left the stones not bread, on forty days  
Of fasting. Let the holy Brotherhood handle,  
Dispense abroad and spend, from day to day,  
Thy daily revocable bounty.

ELIZABETH.                I hold my goods ;  
But live not on them. I will card wool, and  
                         thrive  
Upon the proceeds. No more the poor's patron,  
I will be poor.

CONRAD.                    Well.

ELIZABETH.                Let the dead bury their dead !  
My wedding garment hang I up in church.  
This church is garish ; oh, translate his wreck,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

The ribs and keel of Ludwig, all the wreckage,  
To Rheinhartsbrun.

RUDOLPH. To the Abbey Church ; he chose it.  
To-morrow be it done.

ELIZABETH. Oh, to part so !  
Ye are the sons of mothers, priests !  
To be a barren woman ! Mother of God,  
Pity me ! And then the dead, too !  
A dungeoned wretch hath loved spiders and mice,  
And he would give creation to be loved  
By his own child. God be with you all !  
I, as the spouse of Heaven, take flight for Marpurg.

*(Exit into Chapel, with all WOMEN present.)*

GERARD. In faithful sackcloth will she re-appear.

BISHOP. Enough, she is not for this blustering age.

RUDOLPH. We must conclude, when we paint God  
ignoble

The error is blasphemy, and there's to rue  
Heaven's outraged reverence. Heinrich Raspon,  
Thou art Regent for life, now solemnly  
To pay and receive vows of fealty.

HEINRICH. That shall be done at once, and orderly.

LEUTOLF. Beware a dark night, friar !

HARTWIG. Hate bears a sword !

CONRAD. All we await perfecting of the rite.



THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

(*Exit*, at one door, BISHOP OF BAMBERG, HEINRICH,  
RUDOLPH, WALTER, LEUTOLF, HARTWIG, WOLFRAM  
and ATTENDANTS; and, at another door, GERARD  
and the FRIARS.)

As the Prince of Sin, I love power ; and love  
Seeing her so powerless—which is too much  
Like loving her. So kind will torture us  
Who torture kind ; or I have heretofore  
Felt such commotion, somewhat pitiful,  
While folk have burned. Affection ? Better be  
Buried alive with scorpions ! The storm  
Is overpast that shook me to the roots.  
A man of blood ; so am I named, I know,  
When in our Order brethren speak their mind.  
The Pope chides my austerity, at some length.  
He little hates whoever murders me :  
That is my certain presage. Melt, weak Pontiff,  
Like solderer's metal ; melt i' the crucible !  
As for Elizabeth of Hungary,  
Her lot is, owing to original sin,  
To die a drunkard's death through abstinence ;  
For extremes meet, so sayeth the saw ; and she  
Like to Saint Anthony, in the Egyptian waste,  
Seeing devils everywhere. There is no help.  
Nor would I help, being convinced 'tis best,

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

In Heaven's economy. Now I sweat blood !

Wisdom of serpents that do fascinate

With looking ! Now must there be found

Relenting in the Archangel of the steel-yard,

The Archangel of Doomsday, not in me !

*(Re-enter ELIZABETH as a Franciscan Tertiary, with all  
the WOMEN.)*

*Benedicite.*

ELIZABETH.

Pity me, O Heaven !

*(Exeunt OMNES.)*

SCENE III.—IN THE WARTBURG.

(*Enter LEUTOLF and HARTWIG, all armed.*)

HARTWIG. Now lie Ludwig's bones at Rheinhartsbrun,  
and the Wartburg here gives us welcome home.

LEUTOLF. Marpurg grows dangerous.

HARTWIG. Be before him. Yon Count von Saym had  
best league with us, and fly Eisenach.

LEUTOLF. Good Wolfram's heart rides over light in  
his bosom.

(*Enter WALTER and WOLFRAM.*)

How fare ye, noble lords ?

WOLFRAM. Freezingly and meltingly.

HARTWIG. How so ?

WOLFRAM. 'Twixt fear and fire. Caiaphas were a  
milking babe beside of this legate ; the noblest of the  
land, through him, fall to Tophet in temporality ; accused  
on secret testimony, if they deny, condemned ; confessing,  
for the term of their natural lives are put in durance. He  
will saddle upon you, ere ye may cross yourselves, strange

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

heresies, as I wot not, Manichean error out of the East, saddle and girth them on you.

HARTWIG. And upon thee, likewise.

WOLFRAM. I take my error to be crossing Conrad's path. But every land hath the Jews it merits, and the friars it deserves.

LEUTOLF. We deserve ill ; Death and the Devil and Tom Fool carouse 'with us nightly. We are well in arms.

WOLFRAM. Rest ye well in them.

HARTWIG. We look not to rest. Ye shall hear of our deeds when they are done.

*(Exit with LEUTOLF.)*

WALTER. They say true ; yet how ill we deserve—there, nought said is wisely said.

WOLFRAM. I will never fear for words. Young Hermann's right is drugged and sleeping ; and, I think, Prince Hermann will sleep all so sound as his right, soon.

WALTER. I will tell thee privily—yet why, an thou art honest, serve thy liege lady so ? It is thy shame.

WOLFRAM. I could no other, by knighthood's golden spurs ; my Countess paved hell with my good intentions.

WALTER. Let those same paving stones hear : Rudolph von Varila, mine uncle, hath greetings from Pressburg ; the great Hungarian Prince Banfi shall bid Elizabeth to

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

the fire-side of her father's palace there, along with Hungary's grand-child. My noble uncle, retired on his lands, prays me prefer the Ambassador to Marpurg, where is now my lady's bower.

WOLFRAM. My lady's bower, my lady's rose bower ? Her wattled hovel ; her hutch !

WALTER. Her royal father is movingly incensed.

WOLFRAM. Why, then, a hungry man is an angry man, and the King of Hungary is angry. See, here is one to cure our dumps.

(*Enter FOOL.*)

FOOL. My sister is with child by the lord Heinrich. She hath smothered herself. She threatened drowning ; but drowning is too cold a death for January.

WOLFRAM. A capful of wind, a squall !

FOOL. She swore it is the Lord Heinrich is her wronger. More by token, she weareth a ring of his.

WALTER. Know you what you say, man ?

FOOL. Sirs, sir, my tears are not thunderbolts. Nor I have no coat-armour.

WALTER. Thou wert dangerous else.

FOOL. A merry jest ; a merry, devilish, lecherous jest ! Ye nimble devisers of traps, pitfalls and judgments for the wicked, prosper my contriving. Oh, all ye saints, if I knew a prayer now ! A gridiron be my

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

bed, so he fry with me ! A jest, a jest ; merry, merry, merry !

(*Exit.*)

WOLFRAM. Is the fool out of his wits ?

WALTER. Thou hast said. Thekla has added self-murder to the sin of unlawful conversation. We shall see the fool as avenger. I must take horse, and meet the Prince Banfi.

(*Enter* BLACK FRIAR, *with parchment and a* SERGEANT.)

WOLFRAM (*To* FRIAR). This entity of mine, is it the letter Zed of your study ?

FRIAR. Read !

WOLFRAM. I am arraigned to appear before the Kaiser's son and Doctor Conrad, at Mayence. I am a dead man.

(*Excunt* OMNES ; *WOLFRAM guarded.*)



## ACT V

### SCENE I.—MARPURG. BEFORE ELIZABETH'S HUT.

(*Enter ISENTRUDE and GUTA.*)

ISENTRUDE. How she clipt them, when we gave them to her arms in the porch at Bamberg! One salve hath widowhood; I buried mine ere my day of need; graves of a cubit long. To rob her of all, at once! Some respite had to be, or she ran mad; both her daughters let live here with her a while, some short while; then first one withdrawn, and now the second, also. I hear the little birds do well with the good Abbess. Yet they cry themselves to sleep, many a night and oft.

GUTA. But her little prince grows a brave lad, all say that see him. La, there! A Magyar Archduke to seek her out at Marpurg here, or I know nought of it.

(*Enter WALTER and BANFI.*)

BANFI. Oh, sir, her mother's lapse is buried now; Rich Hungary throws wide his doors.



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

WALTER. Not wealth, Prince Banfi,  
Her will is wanting. Here is her priestly cell ;  
These are her Maids of Honour.

BANFI. How fares her Highness ?

ISENTRUDE. According with her choice of what is best.  
Within the fire-place of this ruined kiln,  
All thatched with pine boughs, for a savour sweet,  
She keeps her court and state.

BANFI. Can I believe ?  
Hermann, young Hermann's grandsire, at that sport  
When the six Minnesingers in the Wartburg  
Contended for the mastery of song,  
Summoned the Zingar Klingsohr  
As arbiter over that tuneful strife,  
From where among the Magyars he roamed.  
He, found in astrology and necromancy,  
Out of that province called the Seven Castles  
In King Andreas' realm, coming to Eisenach,  
Foretold a wondrous daughter to his king,  
Then painfully brought forth, while peace on earth  
And plenty blessed the land for it. Your Prince  
Chose thine own uncle, and the noble dame,  
Bertha von Beindeleben, now no more,  
To go on embassy, with burdened gifts,  
To crave for Ludwig this princess's hand ;

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

And here she spends her widowhood? The lintel  
Would have forced bowing of us.

ISENTRUDE. As any house of leprosy is served  
In common use and custom, grave-yard mould  
Upon her roof the sexton's spade hath cast ;  
She ordered so. She is not now within.  
See, ye might eat your supper off the floor,  
So clean it is.

Herein a paralytic boy she nursed ;  
Anon, a loathsome leper, cast away  
By the way-side, whom all despite we buried.  
Noisy or dullest idiocy she tends.

While this month her director lieth low.  
Look, from the common hospital, her care,  
She comes, with Gerard the good Minorite,  
Propping up Master Conrad like a tree  
Shaken with sickness, till he needs their stay  
Or else he fell to earth, yet she herself  
More pitiful than he. She spins for bread ;  
And ever as she waneth weak and weak,  
By staring vigil and by fast refined,  
Her earnings dwindle. Here, a workday gown  
We bring to robe her ; for, to mend her wear,  
She, with a deftness all her own, doth sew  
Odd rags into the rents ; till she is drest

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

In hoddan and in patchwork. On her feet,  
Clouted her shoon, and yet, with seemly care,  
Thrice cobbled ere they split ; her tresses bound  
With wisps of tow ; about her throat, a sacking  
Pinned with a butcher's skewer ; her girdlestead  
The hempen cincture of Saint Francis keeps,  
The only order of her chivalry ;  
And in the streets the barefoot boys and girls  
Pelt her with mud : and hoot at her for mad.  
Light shineth through her, she wasteth so away.

(*Enter CONRAD, led between GERARD and ELIZABETH.*)

BANFI. And is this laughable, fantastic thing  
My voyage's haven ? Oh, my liege Andreas !

WALTER. That sadness should awake its opposite,  
And this be laughable !

BANFI. What is in her hand ?

ISENTRUDE. The flax that is her means of livelihood.

BANFI. I did not think to live to see

A king's daughter spin.

ISENTRUDE. My lord hath seen king's daughters  
Do worse and not blush.

WALTER. Nobly returned.  
Rentals that might supply her in grand ease  
She puts in trust for ends devotional.  
But stand we close, she speaks.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

ELIZABETH.                      Sweet fellow-creatures ;  
Gather me the little children of the Earth  
Together ; call them into the Way. I am  
Become as a little child.

BANFI. Meditation holds her  
From knowledge of us. My head beneath thy feet !  
I come, attourney, from the Danube's bank.

ELIZABETH. Then welcome !

BANFI.                      Royalest Mistress,  
Thy father in Galicia, most grieved  
Over his daughter's wrongs, doth leash us Huns  
Who strain upon the thong, and scarce touch bread,  
Sickening to right thee and thy child.

ELIZABETH. Have my friends risked life and lands,  
And I refused the booty ?

BANFI.                      I know it.

ELIZABETH.                      Besides which,  
Thou speakest a dead tongue, who is my father ?

BANFI. He who now calls thee home. Wrathful  
he is,  
But nothing warlike, since thou wilt not so.  
Andreas calls thee home. Comfort his age  
And thy distresses ; and let be forgot  
This slattern interlude of raggedness.

ELIZABETH.                      A thousand Noes.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Isentrude, Guta and I will live apart,  
Telling our rosaries morn, noon, and night.  
(To CONRAD)

Thou need'st not tighten grip upon my arm ;  
I hold out unto the end.

WALTER (To CONRAD). Bloodhound ! thou hast the  
dry rot.

GERARD. Sick of a fever,  
Caught of the infectious poor, mid whom we work.

WALTER. Thou wearest out thy sheath, thou sword.

CONRAD. I shall sit at Mayence,  
Upon the judgment seat, God willing, yet.  
I am a petty vein of the broad vine  
Which is the save-all of the draffy world.

BANFI. Ill fame of thee, Conrad, is gone abroad ;  
Thou makest a pipkin of the land, a skillet  
To brew thy hell-broth in.

ELIZABETH. I trust he go  
In gentle scope. (To CONRAD) If thou at Mayence  
Wilt persecute—Mercy, I cannot be  
Vehement now, for famine ! I will rebel !  
Oh, fie upon this faint and fallen spirit  
That mars plain speaking.

CONRAD. Princess, for that word,  
I do forbid thee, here, to give henceforth

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Food, coin or clothes to any living soul.  
Isentrude and Guta, also, thy handmaids,  
See thou no more. Think me weak, I am strong.  
I pick thee out women of bitter speech,  
To make thy bed.

GUTA. I'll tear your eyes out !

ISENTRUDE. Cry thine own out, weeping.

ELIZABETH. No soul to be near me, not a loving soul,  
not a soul ?

CONRAD (*To ISENTRUDE and GUTA*). Avoid us !

ISENTRUDE. Throw this about thee.

GUTA. We made it for thee.

ELIZABETH. I have been naked when the cold  
church

Rose like a tombstone over me.

ISENTRUDE. Throw this about thee,

In remembrance of me.

ELIZABETH. For this thy welcome serge,

My master's head-shake puffs it into Limbo ;

And ye are unsubstantial and dance,

Before my swimming eyes.

ISENTRUDE. You see, my lord,

How limb by limb, he breaks her on the wheel.

But tears no more can flow for single ills ;

Why dig up each and look at it alone ?

THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Sorrow on sorrow buries its predecessor ;  
Here, in an overwhelming heap they lie.

(*Exeunt ISENTRUDE and GUTA.*)

ELIZABETH. The king would lap me in fur. Shall I  
disinherit

The ermine, or wild-cat flayed quick, to keep  
Lustre in the hair ? Lie I not warm in straw  
As in eider-down ?

BANFI. That were the better quilt.

ELIZABETH. *Thou shalt not steal.* Have the birds no  
property

In their own feathers ?

BANFI. But, Princess, thou art more  
Than the myriads of eider-ducks.

ELIZABETH. Three times the nest is robbed.  
Oh, this hath made me lie a-cold in down.  
For listen ; the first nest is moulted plumes,  
Savings from summer, which the shipmen filch—  
I must sit down, I am not all I was—  
And then the hen-bird—hold me up !—the hen-bird pulls  
Her silky warmth to repair her nursery ;  
And dies of cold ; while still the shipmen thieve—  
My head aches. Oh ! a moment, pray—  
So last the drake doth pluck his breast and dies.  
Yet still the shipmen thieve ;

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Leaving the ducklings to the winter spleen.

Ye smile. For such a theft, is't so unjust

To inhabit fire for ever ?

BANFI. Poor seamstress, with thy pallet bed ;  
Wan cloistress !

WALTER. Thy fingers are worn sore with toil.

ELIZABETH. Who works not, shew me his title deed  
to live.

Do we abhor unsavoury poverty,  
And stop the delicate nostril ? Riches, and Sloth  
That yawns and rubs her eyes, have sullied it,  
Pillaged it, stript it ; we are murderers all,  
If we be idlers. I am thrifty, I hope  
And trust and pray.

BANFI. Thou wouldst lie warm in the grave ;  
Smile in a shroud. Lord Walter,  
Base things become her who is nothing base ;  
Foins to her breeding. I will tell Hungary  
His child is richer than Jerusalem  
With all her gold. (*To ELIZABETH*) Suffer us kiss thy  
hand.

ELIZABETH. I am almost in the seventh heaven. The  
glassy sea  
Glints marvellously around me. Sirs, good-bye !  
Rainbow, on rainbow, on rainbow !



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

WALTER. She is visionary !

BANFI. This place is holy ground.

ELIZABETH. Unless I had lived to believe in the  
goodness of God

In the land of the living, I had melted in tears.

Oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness ! Lo !

Clouds break in thunderless lightning !

BANFI. Admirable lady !

ELIZABETH. Sawest thou Hermann lately ?

WALTER. Ay, Madam !

ELIZABETH. Not a word more of him !

No word of him I say, nor of my girls.

Tell me how Thekla does ?

WALTER. She is dead !

ELIZABETH. We must all so.

Inter me in my sackcloth, when I am called home.

*(Exeunt, at one door, WALTER and BANFI, and the rest  
into the HUT.)*

SCENE II.—RUDOLPH'S CASTLE.

(*Enter* RUDOLPH *and* his COUNTESS.)

COUNTESS. Dear my husband, what gleanings bring you of your flying visit to our gentle Landgravine?

RUDOLPH. Isentrude and Guta, her fast friends, are driven from her door; while Conrad encompasseth her with women—familiar of the Order, tale-bearers to him of her least unmindfulness.

COUNTESS. But this biting slander that is abroad—it breathed not near her—that she doth live with the friar in an unholy union—what of this?

RUDOLPH. As thou deemed'st right I should, I warned her. She, making no reply, but so sadly shaking her head, shewed me her shoulders ploughed by the penitential scourge. That was Conrad's dalliance. So I said no more, but sorrowfully came away.

(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III.—HALL OF THE WARTBURG.

(*Enter HEINRICH, SOPHIA, WALTER, LORDS and ATTENDANTS.*)

HEINRICH. A bumping rouse, friends ! I am a man of few words ; find your tongues in wine.

WALTER. The merry Count of Saym is charred at the stake dead. Erlstetten and Erba hold themselves in hiding ; called to clear themselves, where Conrad sat as a man from death's door, they refused coming ; 'tis said, wear armour day and night, and lurk like robbers. Conrad is back at Marburg, pending their capture.

SOPHIA (*To HEINRICH*). She shall be canonized to our eternal honour. Dear son, let the fool first make thee merry, then I will contrive thy courtship ; but be thy hand never so at advantage, what lady loveth a husband she can smile not out of the jaundice ?

HEINRICH. For the succession, I would not have it Hermann's.

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SOPHIA. I name thee two Princesses—fair ones.

HEINRICH. Pick and choose !

(*Enter FOOL.*)

FOOL. As without clothing, no pick-pockets, so without law no crime.

HEINRICH. And without whipping no honesty.

SOPHIA. To thy master.

FOOL. Shall I give him a stitch in the side? Hear tell of Jack the Giant Killer and his dinner with the Cornish Giant, where he should be served as the relish.

HEINRICH. All have heard this a score of times.

FOOL. Suffer me ! Quoth the Giant, "*I will feed larger than thou.*" "*Go to,*" quoth Jack ; and spooned the hasty pudding into a poke thonged below his chin. Quoth again. "*Thou art surpassed, for as big as thou art, or thou do as I.*" "'*Oa's splutter her nails !*" sware 'a with a round oath, "*that can I.*" Whereat Jack ripped me open the poke, and out rolled the hasty pudding. "*Thou makest me no fool, to come short of thee,*" quoth Mountain-sides—

WALTER. Oh, the ruin of emulation and a proud stomach !

FOOL. And, incontinently, ripped up his own belly, to have the pudding forth ; so, round arm ! (*Stabs*

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HEINRICH.) Victual or vitals ! Think of Thekla ! Oh, tell it in Marpurg, and let the world so hang !

*(Runs out. HEINRICH falls.)*

WALTER. Ha, ha ! Excellent played ! Thou art in the spirit of it, my lord.

SOPHIA. I have seen Judas Iscariot fall better in the Mystery.

HEINRICH. This is no feint, it is a faint. I bleed inward !

SOPHIA. Go to ! Inwardly, thou hast more spilth of Rhenish than of blood. Stand up, for shame ! Quit this fooling.

HEINRICH. I do confess my sins ; I would have murdered Hermann ; and I have walked foully.

WALTER. Wild and wilder.

HEINRICH. Hell, hell, flaming hell ! Hell within me, hell without ! Death gapes on me ; and ye stand laughing ! *(Dies.)*

SOPHIA. Give him air.

WALTER. Is it an apoplexy ? 'Fore me, he is gone. Let the bells be rung backwards ! Hoist the bridge ! Long live our Landgrave Hermann ! Take up the dead.

SOPHIA. My second Son !

*(Exeunt OMNES with the body of HEINRICH.)*

SCENE IV.—MARPURG. A STREET.

(*Enter LEUTOLF and HARTWIG, all armed.*)

LEUTOLF. To Marpurg are we come, on the track of this hellish Conrad.

HARTWIG. Sleet and thaw, 'tis a foul night.

LEUTOLF. Rome will not warrant him ; yet an unarmed priest——

HARTWIG. Snare him ; slaughter him !

LEUTOLF. Whist !

(*Enter CONRAD and GERARD, cowed.*)

CONRAD. Get thee behind me, Satan !

GERARD. You do wrong. The world is one household ; bid her love the babes she hath borne. We friars are sent unto the heart of the people. It shall become thee well, if her children be called at last.

CONRAD. It shall not be. Thou knowest the teaching : No man safely goes abroad that loves not to stay at home ; no man safely speaks, that would not willingly hold his tongue ; no man safely governs that would be

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ungoverned, and no man safely rejoices but he that bears his cross. The last is for her learning. How is it with her ?

GERARD.                      Fallen on trance,  
She is aneiled some hours, already shriven,  
Where nought did stain her shrift ; but then partook  
Of the elements ; after, as cloyed with that  
Celestial dietary, lay entranced,  
Even till we deemed it was the final close.

CONRAD.    Thou did'st well, calling me early abroad  
To visit her ; for, by our reckoning,  
She shall not see another night make dark  
The inglorious earth. Gerard, to make her blessed—  
This paper writes about her sanctitude—  
We have toiled hugely. To her sick-bed in haste.

LEUTOLF.    *Salve !*

(*Excunt* CONRAD and GERARD.)

HARTWIG.    Is this he ?

LEUTOLF.    I doubt it. Make sure. Yonder our  
Princess lodges. Muffle ; and call the Dominican from  
her bedside, as if packmen lost our way. They lie that  
name it murder.

(*Excunt.*)

SCENE V.—WITHIN ELIZABETH'S HUT.

(ELIZABETH *in her bed*. TWO WOMEN, *of the Third Order of S. Francis, attendant*.)

FIRST WOMAN. Yet the patter of rain.

SECOND WOMAN. In this drizzle, damp and fog, our folk of the town lurk but till the breath be out of her body, to tear her all to pieces—a bag of bones—to purloin odd joints for heir-looms. Night is far spent.

FIRST WOMAN. She hath not long closed her eyes. She woke wakeful from the swoon she fell in, that we thought death.

SECOND WOMAN. We dock her sleep by so much lesseach morn. (*To ELIZABETH*) Go to the ant thou sluggard!

ELIZABETH. My Ludwig hath gold hair  
Yellow as amber! What's o'clock?

SECOND WOMAN. Beat the hour upon thee!

ELIZABETH. Beat me not! I will do my task to a  
tittle,  
To a very jot.



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FIRST WOMAN. Up! Wool-gathering? Work!  
till thou drop i' the shafts!

Up! Spindle and distaff.

SECOND WOMAN. Why thou less than another?

ELIZABETH. Hermann draws the latch! Nay, I am  
lost again;

Could I not watch one hour?

*(Enter ISENTRUDE and GUTA.)*

FIRST WOMAN. These are her women, fallen on want.

ELIZABETH *(Seeing ISENTRUDE and GUTA)*. Are you  
in health?

ISENTRUDE. We are starving.

ELIZABETH. That is a small matter!

My heart is breaking.

ISENTRUDE. We have news of thy daughters.

ELIZABETH. News?

FIRST WOMAN. They are dead.

ELIZABETH. So are they dead, to me.

FIRST WOMAN. And you to them.

ELIZABETH. And I to them.

I'll think no more on them, but on the Prince of Peace.

ISENTRUDE. They live! She hath not four and  
twenty summers;

Not four and twenty summers. Be good to her,  
Since Conrad gives her to your hands.

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SECOND WOMAN.                      Four and twenty summers ?  
'Tis so long since my old despot died ! She hath used  
Balsamums and caudles to cheat Eve's curse enough ;  
Let her wear to sinew !

FIRST WOMAN.                      Her Director  
Will strike her upon both cheeks for this, I sha' warrant.

ELIZABETH. Bird, beast and fish, I must love all  
God's creatures,  
But surely I must take no choice friend.

(*Enter CONRAD and GERARD.*)

ISENTRUDE. I am ashamed I begged.

ELIZABETH. I cannot call my soul my own.

CONRAD (*Offering to strike ELIZABETH*). Child, must I  
scourge thee ? Forget these folk have names.

ISENTRUDE. Forbear !

GERARD (*To CONRAD*). Withhold thy hand. (*To*  
ISENTRUDE *and GUTA*) Forsake this ground for good.

ISENTRUDE. Since we but buy her scathe, we do.

(*Exeunt ISENTRUDE and GUTA.*)

ELIZABETH. Send me thankful for all mercies !

GERARD.                      She falleth in ecstasy.

CONRAD. Stand in the door, for fear these begging  
women

Come back. I will take measures for their wants.  
She must not know it.

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GERARD. She noteth nought ; uplifts her face.  
At the door be my post.

(*Exit.*)

FIRST WOMAN. Father, whole mornings will she  
preach  
Thy homilies to her pillow.

CONRAD. Good. (*Aside*) I, who have shuffled  
princedom, shrink  
To a household chaplain.

FIRST WOMAN. Her spirit's grace  
Perfecteth so her flesh, that even when pricked  
She feels no pain.

CONRAD. A miracle no doubt.

ELIZABETH. My mother had a sister named Hedwega,  
And verily she was a saintly soul.  
I will stretch out my arms across the wall,  
Crucifying flesh.

SECOND WOMAN. Lie down !

ELIZABETH. My mother floats on the air.  
See, see, see, she weeps and is on fire !

SECOND WOMAN. A bedlam dream !

FIRST WOMAN. What a mother had'st, for shame !

ELIZABETH. I will pray for her soul's health.  
Prayer and fulfilment both in Heaven's gift lie,  
Given for the asking.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

CONRAD (*To the Women*). Tell your beads with her.  
(*Aside*) Carnal wedlock, or whether compunctive in  
The retrospect, she is mute upon. They pray.  
But not for me. A mighty yearning racks  
My incommunicable consciousness,  
Although she loathed me for it, to kiss her. Folly,  
Oh, folly! I begin to doubt, at last,  
But I shall gnash my teeth. How still she prays!  
Horror, I shall be damned, she being in bliss!  
Damned! By my sacerdotal vow, I am  
Convicted and condemned. This floor is glass,  
Wherethrough I see my own prepared abode,  
A window down to hell.

ELIZABETH. The old dragon should not burn for  
me.  
Angels in ignorance must either nod,  
Or Heaven is a martyrdom of tears.  
An angel radiant falls on me from God.  
I am a seer, if ever there be seers.

SECOND WOMAN. Nightmare with lying on the back!

CONRAD. She is prophetic;  
When I lay sick some months back, she foretold  
I should not die in my bed.

ELIZABETH. Make haste, make haste, come up out of  
the pit;

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Thou art innocent, at last, of sinful leaven,  
O mother mine, thy lamp is trimmed and lit,  
Thou art forgiven, if sin be forgiven  
Not seven times, but seventy times seven.  
A vision as a chariot of fire  
Gallops with thee into the heaven of heaven !  
*Gloria in excelsis !* Hark ! the choir !  
One Hallelujah ! I am past life's last desire.

(*Re-enter* GERARD.)

GERARD. Master Conrad !

CONRAD. Brother Gerard !

GERARD. Thou art called forth of certain strangers.

CONRAD. Watch and pray. *As a thief in the night,*  
mind ye (*To the WOMEN*).

GERARD. The dawn is travel-stained. Who is this  
rides breakneck ?

CONRAD. 'Tis a coxcombed fool. Turn thine eyes  
the other way.

(*Exit with* GERARD.)

FIRST WOMAN (*To her fellow*). He is so hard,  
man-slayers might whet their knives on him.

ELIZABETH. Sister, in thine ear ; see that no triptych  
dare to paint  
My secret flagellations, for gossips  
To scrutinize and gloat over it.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

FIRST WOMAN.                      Suffer all things  
Useful to edifying.

ELIZABETH.                      Not this ; nor this ;  
Let none from my dead hands and feet pluck off the  
    nails,  
For talismanic amulets. Let me lie quiet  
In the God's acre. I hear horrible stories  
Recount disjointing of the corse.

SECOND WOMAN.                  You will be stark dead, fool.

ELIZABETH. Vultures ! Neighbours ! But are my  
fledglings dead ?

*(Enter FOOL.)*

BOTH WOMEN. Hence !

FOOL. I killed the lord Heinrich who killed Thekla's  
honour ; swam the slab moat, like the newt it is  
death to touch ; stole a horse ; and have ridden him  
with a sieve and a halter. I killed the lord Heinrich !  
O ye devils that catch his soul, smother him in  
the tanpit with my sister ! Have him for ever  
choking.

ELIZABETH. Revengeful ?

FOOL. Now thou laughest at me. Slave that I am,  
a laughingstock, a human being. Had not the crazy  
soul honesty once ? You cherished her. Would I had  
a better trade than to make folk laugh !

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

ELIZABETH. It is better to make men laugh than to make men weep.

FOOL. I killed the lord Heinrich who wrongs thy pretty Hermann ; had been the death of him. I do thee, by the way, a good turn. Sing we together like morning stars, thou and I. Heinrich is with Pontius Pilate.

ELIZABETH. Revengeful? Boy, *Forgive us our trespasses*

*As we forgive*, petitions for damnation,  
We being unforgiving. Were it undone !

FOOL. Is this good doctrine, pretty Mistress?  
Damned gallant, grin on her, grin on her !

ELIZABETH. Seek absolution. Sisters, he is cold ;  
Blow up the fire.

FOOL. Who counteth chickens, if the cosmic Egg be addled ? This is no laughing matter.

ELIZABETH. Thou art a grave fool at last.

(*Enter LEUTOLF and HARTWIG.*)

HARTWIG. Conrad of Marpurg is down ! We come red-handed from it.

FIRST WOMAN. Armed? Brave men.

HARTWIG. Saym became a faggot ; our trunks were blazed for felling.

LEUTOLF. We have forestalled the Courts.

FIRST WOMAN. Come not in sight of our sister.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

HARTWIG. One other knocked on the sconce—that had to be, he meddled—we poll-axed the friar.

LEUTOLF. *Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my soul*, quoth he. *Into the devil's*, quoth we. Then the dint of death.

ELIZABETH. List! A bird singeth within the wall.

FIRST WOMAN. I hear nothing, sister.

ELIZABETH. I hear it sing most infinitely sweet.  
Could I have saved my husband?

HARTWIG. She sees us, and knows us.

LEUTOLF. Lady, believe that warriors in camp  
Are loving nurses.

HARTWIG. We did our endeavour.

ELIZABETH. Bury me by him.

FIRST WOMAN. Ring now her passing bell.

ELIZABETH. I pray ye light a taper at my head  
And at my feet, and lay me out in straw.  
I shall not see my son become a man;  
Such a one as his father was.

(*Re-enter GERARD, wounded.*)

GERARD. Slay me, but save this letter, when the good  
Master lieth bloody a stone's throw off. This brief will  
be her canonization. Herein Conrad hath writ her holy  
living and dying. The end shall be added; what  
miracles wrought attested.



## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

LEUTOLF. We have no spite against thee, though we did wound thee.

HARTWIG. Our hest is done.

GERARD. This roll must to Rome.

LEUTOLF. The Lady Sophia will put heart and soul into it. But, lo, hist !

ELIZABETH. Blessed are they born to a low estate,  
Tempted to steal, or sell body and soul  
For filthy lucre—if they be women  
They are burdened more than men—wealth buys exemption

From half the devil's snares—to leave us naked  
To the more subtle. Beloved, beloved !

GERARD. Sweet lispings ! Infinite sorrow !

ELIZABETH. The headlong wind, that bugler of the sky,  
Calls me to play with it, on the road I go.  
Put out thy hands to me, Ludwig. Chiming bells ;  
Listen ! But not the chimes of Eisenach !  
Where are my children ? Call them round my bed.  
Prop me a little.  
I know that my Redeemer liveth. Beloved !  
Hush ! (*Dies.*)

SECOND WOMAN. That is the death rattle.

FIRST WOMAN. I heard her heartstrings break, one by one.

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

SECOND WOMAN. Open the window for her soul.

GERARD. Peace ; lay money on her eyes. Let embalm her, like Saint Clare. Fold her palms, lay her out. "For ever and ever, Amen."

LEUTOLF. Poor Motley mourning, too ; how he rains tears !

FIRST WOMAN. A man, his own accuser, hath slain Heinrich Raspon.

LEUTOLF. Then must we go stablish young Hermann's right ; and, for his minority, some regency. The lords of Varila shall know. Farewell, Elizabeth, I follow thy son's luck.

HARTWIG. The foulness of her foes destroys themselves.

We will bestow this wild knave, to abide the law.

*(Exeunt LEUTOLF and HARTWIG with the FOOL.)*

GERARD. *In manus tuas, Domine !* O lord,  
Into thy hands.  
Thou sleepest, sweet vagabond on thine own lands,  
Fallen asleep under a ragged pall  
Thy decent limbs to keep.  
Thou sleepest ; and our voices drop, fond dread,  
For fear lest we awake thee out of sleep.  
Rumoured Slander, blowing leathern lungs,  
That vermin upon greatness, full of tongues,

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

Awakes not thee, nor yet the famed lips  
Of the bright regent Truth. But thy eclipse  
Is ours ; alas, it is beyond control  
That virtue such as thine must pass away.  
Methinks but yesterday, but only yesterday,  
But yesterday, for charity she stole,  
Loaves of wheaten bread caught in her lap  
And apron clewed up, nor she ate no scrap.  
Lo and behold, the crust and crumb  
Burgeoned to roses, bud and bloom,  
When on the threshold face to face she stood  
Shamefast to be found doing good.  
Now in this nameless pause and twilight dim  
Thou sleepest betwixt death and glory risen,  
Death in tears not cold,  
With requiem over thy coffin rolled.  
From broken charnel, glorious dost thou soar  
In right ascension aloft to swim  
Over the welkin blue for evermore  
Ransomed from weary sleep to wake  
With angels and archangels, there partake  
Of passovers where the Lamb upon the Throne  
Carrieth Sin and Sinners as His own,  
Within the many mansions prepared,  
Martyr, Patriarch, Apostle, Saint

## THE TRAGEDY OF SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

And holy Prophet circling ; never stint  
Hymns of praise and of thanksgiving sung,  
With incense wreathed from censer swung.  
Verily, verily, Saint Elizabeth,  
Sleep into life awaking out of death.

FIRST WOMAN. Hosannah in the Highest !

GERARD (*Aside*). I bleed sore !

SECOND WOMAN. Saint Elizabeth ! Saint Elizabeth !

FIRST WOMAN. Saint Elizabeth !

GERARD. Peace, be still ; even as the Word did say  
Unto the wind blown whither it would. Be still,  
Peace ; let us pray.  
I also die.

Lay her where all may see her lie  
Under the lychgate. It is almost day.

(*Exeunt OMNES with the body of ELIZABETH.*)

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